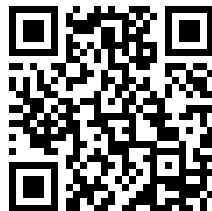

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ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES

VOLUME XI

JANUARY TO JUNE, 1873.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICES,
19, TAVISTOCK STREET, W.C.

m.v.j.

LONDON:
SWEETING AND CO., PRINTERS,
80, GRAY'S INN ROAD, HOLBORN.

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ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 262.

January 4, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER IV. (*continued*).



THEY were a kindly, dissolute, improvident race—always sinning, always repentant, always sick and sorry. There was the old lady at the end of the court,

who worked hard all the week and got drunk every Saturday night, and was wont to come out at twelve, with her hand to her head, crying aloud unto the four winds, "Oh, Lord, how bad I be!" There were the family of five brothers at No. 2, who fought most nights in pairs, the other three looking on. There were two or three laundresses of the Inn, who were even worse, as regards personal habits and appearance, than poor old Mrs. Peck, and envious of her superior fortune. There was a swarming population all day and all night; there was no peace, no quietness, no chance for anything but endurance.

And in the midst of all this the poor girl had to spend her evenings and her nights. Sometimes she would cry aloud for shame and misery. Sometimes, when she was left alone, the squalor of her surroundings would appear so dreadful, so intolerable, so miserable, that she would resolve to beg and implore Mr. Venn to take her out of them. Sometimes she would shut out the world around her by building castles in the air, and so forget things. Only, as time went on, and things did not change but for the worse, she found it becoming daily more difficult to keep up the illusions of hope, and persuade herself that all this would have an end.

The poor grandmother was a trial. I am afraid the wicked old woman purloined half the money that Venn gave her for his ward, and put it into a stocking. She was not a nice old woman to look at. She had disagreeable habits. She was not reticent of speech. She was totally illiterate. She was interested mainly in the price of the commoner kinds of provisions, such as the bloater of Leather-lane. And when she was in a bad temper, which was often, she was a Nagster. From habit, Lollie always let her go on, till it was bed-time. Then, at least, she was free, for the little room at the back belonged to her. She could have comparative quiet there, at any rate. The old woman preferred sleeping among her pots and pans, as she had been brought up to do, in the front room. Besides, she was afraid of her grand-daughter, and yet proud and fond of her. She felt more comfortable when the child was gone to bed, and she could nag all to herself—audibly, it is true, and with the assistance of a little bottle containing some of Mr. Venn's brandy. On the whole she was well pleased that she had but little of the girl's society. For like will to like; and many were the cheerful little gatherings, not unenlivened with gin, which took place on that first floor, what time Lollie was gone to the theatre with Mr.

Venn, with ancient contemporaries of this dear old woman.

I think I see her now. "Tout ce qu'il y a du plus affreux." An antique "front" always twisted awry over a brow marbled, indeed, but not with thought. A countenance in which deep lines were marked with a deeper black than covered the rest. Small cunning eyes: if you lead a small, cunning life, your eyes do most inevitably become small and cunning of aspect. Fat lips, such as might come from always eating roast pork—the greatest luxury with which Mrs. Peck was acquainted. A bonnet never removed day or night. A dress—but, no; let us stop. Is there not a sort of sacrilege in describing, only to mock at her, a poor old creature who is what the conditions of life made her? Let us bring honour and reverence to old age. For Mrs. Peck no more shall be said. To her virtues very kind, Hartley Venn was to all her faults very blind. She cribbed everything. She never cleaned anything. She smashed everything. She cheated—but she was Lollie's grandmother.

Lollie's education we have sufficiently described. It had, as we have hinted, one capital defect. There was not one word of religion about it. Venn—not because he was an infidel, which he was not; nor because he wished to make an experiment, which was not the case; but simply out of pure carelessness and indifference, and because he never went to church himself—taught his little girl no religion whatever. She knew, from reading, something—the something being the most curious medley possible, from a mixture of every kind of Latin, French, and English authors. Venn respected maidenly innocence so far as to keep harmful books, as he thought them—that is, directly harmful—out of her way; but he gave the child first a literary taste, and then access to writers whose ideas of religion were more "mixed" than would have been good for the most masculine intellect. The Bible she had, never even seen; for the only copy in Venn's possession had, many years before, tumbled behind the bookcase, and was thus lost to view. And of ladies she knew but one, Miss Venn, who still asked her to tea once or twice a year, treated her with exemplary politeness, and sent her away with a frigid kiss. Miss Venn, you see, was suspicious. She always fancied her brother was going to marry the girl; and therefore made it her

business to try and make her understand the great gulf which comparative rank establishes between people—grandchildren of bishops, for instance, and grandchildren of laundresses.

She had two lovers—passed and rejected; *bien entendu*. One was a gallant young lawyer's clerk in the Inn, about her own age, who accosted her one morning with a letter, which she handed, unopened, to Venn. It contained honourable proposals. Venn descended to the court where the aspirant was waiting for an answer, and there and then administered a light chastisement with a walking-cane; the policeman—he of the big beard and the twinkling eyes, not the thin one—looking on with a grim but decided approval.

Then there was Sims the baker. A quiet, genteel young man of a Sunday, if you see him got up in his best, blue tie, and flower in his button hole, with a cane. He attacked the fortress through the grandmother, and persuaded her to accept the first offerings of love, in the shape of certain fancy ones, which greatly pleased the old lady. To her astonishment, the child threw the gifts out of window; and Mr. Venn went round the next day and had a serious talk with the young man. He put on mourning the next Sunday, and walked up and down the Gray's Inn-road all day in the disguise of a mute. But Lollie never saw him; so his silent sorrow was thrown away, and he returned to his Sally Lunn's.

And this is all her story up to the point when we left her in Venn's chamber playing to him.

It was between nine and ten o'clock that she left Gray's Inn for home—not five minutes' walk, and one which she always took alone. Here she had a little adventure. For as she was striding fast along the pavement of Holborn, she became aware of a "gentleman" walking beside her, and gazing into her face. It was one of those moral cobras, common enough in London streets—venomous but cowardly, and certain to recoil harmless before a little exhibition of daring. He coughed twice. Lollie looked straight before her. Then he took off his hat, and spoke something to her. Then, finding she took no notice of him, he took her hand and tried to pass it under his arm.

"We are old friends, my dear," he said, with an engaging smile.

She shook him off with terror, crying out.

There were a few people passing at the time who were astonished to see one gentleman take another gentleman by the coat collar, and kick that gentleman into the gutter.

"Insulted a lady," said the champion to the bystanders, and going back to Lollie.

"Yah!" cried the little mob, closing round him, *for he was down*. And when Lothario emerged from that circle, his hat was battered in, and probably a whole quarter's salary of mischief done to his wardrobe. The moral of this shows how prudent it is not to be taken at a disadvantage. Also that it is best to get up at once if you are kicked into the gutter, and to cross the road; and, thirdly, that as the mob is sure to join the winning side, it is best to be the victor in all street encounters. Some historians give no moral at all to their incidents; for my part, my morals are my strong point. When I do not give one, it is only because the moral may be read so many ways that even the three volumes cannot stretch so far.

"Permit me to see you safely part of your way at least," said Lollie's knight.

He was a gentleman, though apparently of a different kind to Mr. Venn, being very carefully and elaborately dressed. His face she hardly noticed, except that he had a small and very black moustache. But she was so frightened that she was not thinking of faces.

"I live close by," she said. "Permit me to thank you, sir, for your brave interference. I have never been insulted before. You have done me a great service. Good night."

She held out her hand with a pretty grace. He took it lightly, raised his hat, saying—

"I am very happy. Perhaps we may meet again under more fortunate circumstances. Au revoir, mademoiselle; sans dire adieu."

She smiled, and turned into Gray's Inn-road. She looked round once. No; her champion was a gentleman—he was not following her. Why did he speak in French?—'Au revoir, sans dire adieu.' She found herself saying the words over and over again. Nonsense!—of course she would never see him again; and if she should, he was only a stranger to her.

She told Venn in the morning, who flew into a great rage, and promised always to take her home himself when she left his rooms later than six. In the course of the day he calmed down, and delivered an

oration—I am sorry I have no space for it here—on the nature and properties of the common or street snob.

If the British public had the patience of their grandfathers, I would write them a novel in thirty volumes, containing not only Venn's orations, but also an exhaustive Digest of Morality, Philosophy, and Religion; together with a complete Encyclopædia on the Art of Making Life Pleasant, from Prawn Curry with Perier Joutet down to a Crumpet Worry. But we must make the best of what we can get.

CHAPTER V.

PYTHAGORAS once compared life to the letter Y. This letter, starting with a trunk, presently diverges into two branches, which represent respectively the two lines of life: the good and consequently happy—that is the thin line to the right; and the bad and consequently miserable—the thick black one to the left. It is an elementary comparison, and hardly shows the sage at his best. For as to happiness and misery, they seem to me somehow dependent on public opinion and the length of a man's purse. A man with a hundred thousand a year may really do anything—not only without incurring ignominy, but even with a certain amount of applause. He will not, of course, practise murder as one of the Fine Arts, nor will he cheat at whist, and he will have little difficulty in resisting the ordinary temptation to commit burglary. But for the poor man public opinion is a mighty engine of repression. Virtue is his stern, and often bitter, portion. Public opinion exacts from him a life strictly moral and rigidly virtuous. In all places except London, it forces him to go to church: in a manner, it drives him Heavenwards with a thick stick. The rich man, in whose favour any good point—even the most rudimentary—is carefully scored, may be as bad as he pleases; the poor man, against whom we score all we can, is just as bad as he dares to be. This is one objection to the Pythagorean comparison. Another is, that young men never set off deliberately down the thick line. It is, I admit, a more crowded line than the other; but then there are constant passings and re-passings to and fro, and I have seen many an honest fellow, once a roysterer, trudging painfully, in after-years, along the narrow and prickly path, dragged on by

wife and children—though casting, may be, longing looks at the gallant and careless men he has left.

"I knew that fellow, Philip Durnford," an old friend of his told me, "when first he joined. He was shy at first, and seemed to be feeling his way. We found out after awhile that he could do things rather better than most men, and more of them. If you cared about music, Durnford had a piano, and could play and sing, after a fashion. He could fence pretty well, too; played billiards, and made a little pot at pool: altogether, an accomplished man. He was free-handed with his money; never seemed to care what he spent, or how he spent it. Queer thing about him, that he was a smart officer, and knew his drill. I think he liked the routine of the regimental work. Somehow, though, he wasn't popular. Something grated. He was not quite like other men; and I don't suppose that, during the whole six years he was in the regiment, he made a single good friend in it. Perhaps he was always trying to be better than anybody else, and he used to flourish his confounded reading in your face; so that some of the fellows were afraid to open their lips. We didn't seem to care—eh? about John Stuart Mill. Then, he wouldn't take a line. The fast man we can understand, and the man who preaches on a tub and distributes tracts, and the army prig we know, and the reading man; but hang me if we could make out a man who wanted to be everything all at once, and the best man in every line. I can assure you we were all glad when we heard that Durnford was sending in his papers."

That was the state of the case. Phil Durnford started heroically down the thin line. When we meet him again, he is in the thick, the left-handed one, with the mob. This is very sad; because we shall have to see more than enough of him. You see, he wanted patience. He would gladly have won the Victoria Cross, but there was nothing in that way going just then. He would have liked to climb quickly up the tree of honour. But this is a tree which can be only attempted under certain conditions. Had he been a drummer in the French army, about the year 1790, he might have died Marshal of the French Empire. But he fell not upon the piping times of war. So he went in for being a dashing young officer: rode—only he did not ride so well

as some others; gambled—only not with the recklessness that brought glory to others; and was a fast man, but without high spirits. In personal appearance he was handsome, particularly in uniform. His cheek showed—which is common enough in men of the mixed breed—no signs of that black blood which always filled his heart with rage whenever he thought of it. His hair was black and curling, his features clear and regular. Perhaps he might have been an inch or two taller with advantage; while his chin was too weak, and his forehead too receding.

Always weak of will, his heroic element has now, though he is only six and twenty, almost gone out of him. He looks for little beyond physical enjoyment of life: he has no high aims, no purposes, no hopes. Worse than all, he has no friends or belongings. So his heart is covered with an incrustation, growing daily harder and deeper, of selfishness, cynicism, and unbelief. When the devil wanted to tempt him to do something worse than usual, it was his wont to show him his finger-nails, where lay that fatal spot of blue which never leaves the man of African descent, though his blood be crossed with ours for a dozen generations. Then he waxed fierce and reckless, and was ready for anything. If the consciousness of descent from a long line, which has sometimes done well and never done disgracefully, be an incentive to a noble life, surely the descent from a lower and inferior race must be a hindrance.

He thought nobody knew it, and trembled lest the secret should be discovered. Everybody knew it. The colonel and the major had been in Palmiste, and knew more. They knew that George Durnford, late of the 10th Hussars, had only one son by his marriage, and never had any brothers at all. Then they put things together, and formed a conclusion, and said nothing about it, being gentlemen and good fellows.

No brandishing of the sword in front of a wavering line of red; no leading of forlorn hopes—nothing but garrison life and camp life: what should a young man do? Here my former informant comes again to my assistance.

"Durnford," he said, "used to be always trying to outpace some other fellow. Don't you know that a hunchback always makes himself out a devil of a lady-killer; and a parvenu is always the most exclusive; and

a fellow with a nose like a door-knocker always thinks himself the handsomest dog in the regiment? Well, you see, Durnford was a mulatto, an octoroon, or a sixteenth-oroon, or something. He'd read in a book, I suppose, that mulattoes were an inferior race; so nothing would do for him but showing himself an exception to the rule by proving himself our superior—all the same as making himself out a bird by trying to fly. He muddled away his money. But, bless you, he couldn't really chuck. Chucking is a grand gift of nature, cultivated by a course of public school, army coach, and garrison life. Durnford did not understand the art. Now, young Blythe of ours, when he heard of the step vacant, wrote to the governor about it. Well, the governor actually sent him the money, instead of paying it into Cox's. The young beggar screamed with delight. 'O, Lord!' he said, 'look what the governor's done!' And chucked it all in a fortnight, without purchasing the step at all. Durnford could never come up to that, you know. He didn't drink much; but there was one thing men liked in him. If loo was on, Durnford never played sober against men screwed. Always reputed the soul of honour in that respect. But he wanted too much. He would have liked to be popular among all classes, and he was popular among none."

My friend, upon this, took to philosophizing upon the nature and basis of popularity.

"I believe," he said, with some plausibility, "that a fellow is popular if he is believed to be better than he seems. One man, A., is a frightful villain, but he loves and respects B., another tremendous scoundrel and ruffian, because he thinks him possessed of some noble and elevating qualities wanting in himself. He once saw B. toss a halfpenny to a beggar, and say 'Poor devil.' Now that showed a fine vein of native generosity. You don't like a man you think to be worse than yourself, because he must belong to such a devilish bad lot; and the formula of A., the big rascal, is always that he 'may not be a religious man, by gad,' but there are some things which he would not do. . . . Well, you see, that poor beggar Durnford was believed to be worse than he really was. He did it himself. Used to scoff at religion: which is bad form, in my opinion—religion being the business of the chaplain; and I'd just as soon

scoff at the adjutant or the sergeant-major. That did him harm; and in spite of his riding and fencing, and all the rest, he really had very little strength in his body. Fellows said he padded."

When we pick up Philip, which is on the evening when he—for it was he—gallantly came to the rescue, he has not yet sold out, but is enjoying the beginning of a long furlough from Malta. His affairs are not yet desperate, though he has got through a considerable portion of his fortune; having less than half of it left, and a good pile of debts, whenever it shall suit him to pay them. I fear that the account his old brother officer gave of him was, on the whole, correct. Certainly, Philip Durnford, having had a six years' run of "pleasure" and dissipation, knew most things that are to be learned in that time, and was almost beginning to think that the years had been purchased by too great an expenditure of youth, health, and capital.

When the girl left him, he stayed for a moment looking after her, as she tripped up the street with her light and buoyant step, and turning on his heel with a sigh, strode off westward. He went to Arthur's club. Not finding him there, he went to his lodgings, and caught him reading in his usual purposeless, studious way.

"What are you going to do, Arthur," asked Philip, lighting a cigar, and taking the best easy-chair, "with all your reading?"

"Spare me," said Arthur. "I am one of the men who are always *going* to do everything. Frankly, it is useless. I want some one to pull me out of my own habits. But you, Phil, have got energy for all the family."

"I've used some of it to-night," said Phil, laughing, and telling his story. "Such a pretty girl, Arthur. Oh! such a beautiful girl—tall, sir, and as straight as an arrow. I should like to meet her again. I don't believe too much in the sex, but I do believe in the possibility of my making a fool of myself over one, at least; and, by Jove! it would be this one."

"Take care, Phil."

"Were you never in love, Arthur? Come, now, gentle hermit, confess. Was there not some barmaid in Oxford? Was there never a neat-handed Phillis—*ne sit ancillæ tibi amor pudori*—at the college buttery?"

"I have not been in love, Phil," said Arthur, lifting his fair, serious face, "since

we left Palmiste; and then I was in love with Madeleine."

"Poor little Madeleine! So was I, I believe. And where is she now?"

"She was sent to Switzerland, after her father's death, to be educated."

"The education ought to be finished by this time. Why don't you go, old fellow, and search about the playground of Europe? You might meet on the summit of the Matterhorn. 'Amanda' he, and 'Amandus' she, and all would be gas and fireworks."

Then they began to talk about old times and boyish freaks; and Philip's better nature came back to him, for a time at least. He saw little of Arthur. They had not much in common. When they did meet, it was in great friendship and kindness. But they were almost strangers; and it was only now—Philip being home on furlough and Arthur just come up to London—that they had come together at all since the old days in Palmiste.

I forgot to mention one curious thing in Philip's life. On the first day of the year, some unknown person always paid into his account at Cox's the sum of two hundred pounds. This came with a recurrence so regular that Phil looked for it, and counted on it. He put it down to a freak of Arthur's. Certainly, Arthur had a good deal more of his own than he at all knew what to do with. But it was not Arthur—who, living so simply himself, did not understand that his cousin might sometimes be in want of money. Philip took the money, spent it, and wished it had been more; and he said nothing about it to Arthur. The fountain of benevolence, you see, is a source which may possibly be muddled and spoiled by the uncalled-for tears of gratitude.

CHAPTER VI.

SO about this time, Hartley Venn began to be seriously troubled about the future of his *protégé*. He realized, for the first time, that she was now a woman; and yet he was loath to change any of the little customs which had gone on so long. For instance, that kiss at arrival and departure. A man of thirty-eight is certainly old enough to be the papa of a girl of eighteen. On the other hand, many men of thirty-eight are not too old to be the lovers of girls of eighteen. He could not put a stop to that tender little caress. And yet, of late days, he caught himself blush-

ing, and his pulse quickened, when his lips touched her forehead and her lips touched his cheek. Only quite lately this feeling of constraint had sprung up. Not on her part: the last thing the girl thought of was love on the part of her guardian. There was no constraint with her—only that hesitation and doubt which came from the birth of new ideas within her. The germ of many a thought and aspiration is sown in childhood, lying concealed in the brain till the time of adolescence makes it appear and brighten into life.

Then Hartley, putting the question of love out of sight, resolutely refusing to admit it at all into his mind, set himself to work out, as he called it, a practical problem. As he was the most impractical of men, the result did not appear likely to "come out."

He appealed, in his distress, to his sister Sukey.

"You've educated that child," said his sister, "till she can laugh at young ladies. You've put your notions into her head, till she is as full of queer thoughts as you are yourself. She talks about nothing but philanthropy, and history, and what not. She is like no other girl under the sun. And then you come and ask me what you are to do with her. Do you want to get rid of her?"

"Get rid of her! Why, Sukey, you must be mad to think such a thing. No. I want to put her in some way—"

"Of earning a livelihood. Quite proper. And time she did it. By rights she would be a kitchen-maid. Not that I am unkind to her, dear Hartley," she added, as her brother flashed a warning look at her—"not at all. And she is, as I believe, a very good girl—spoiled, of course. What do you say, now, to the bonnet-making?"

Hartley shook his head.

"She shall not work for her bread, Sukey. I have taken a decisive step. I've made my will, Sukey. You don't want any more money. Bob's boy is looked after by his mother's people. And, besides, you can leave him your money, you know."

"I always intended to," said her sister. "You needn't go on. You have left all yours to Laura. Well, of course, it's a shame, and all that. But you can do as you like with your own. What do you want my advice about?"

"That is just the difficulty. I want, some-

how, to do something for her that will take her into a brighter atmosphere, out of the dingy surroundings of her life."

"She lives with her grandmother, does she not? At least, I have always understood that this was the very proper arrangement."

"Yes; where her grandmother lives I have never thought about till the other day. Sukey, my dear, I am a selfish animal. It was all to please myself that I made a toy of the child. To please myself, I watched her intelligence grow under my hands; only to please myself, I put into her head ideas and knowledge. In my own selfish gratification, I have made her ten times as well taught as young ladyhood is apt to be. I have never thought about what was to come of it—or of me. And now—now—she is a woman—and I—"

Sukey laughed.

"My poor dear Hartley, and you?—you are in love with her! I knew it was coming, all along. Of course, it is a blow. After all your brilliant prospects, and the grandson of a bishop, and a Master of Arts, and a barrister-at-law, and a scholar, and all—and—oh! dear, dear! But I always expected it, and always said it. If you will kindly ring the bell and call Ann, she will tell you that I have prophesied it any time this last six years."

When a misfortune comes upon you, it is, at least, a consolation to your friends to have foretold it. But Hartley was walking up and down the room, not listening.

"In love with her? I in love with Lollie? I have loved her ever since she looked up in my face, the very first day I saw her, and put up her lips to be kissed. In love with her? I have never thought of it. Upon my word, Sukey, I have never even thought of it till the last few days. It is nonsense—it is absurd. I am twenty years older than Lollie. She looks on me as her father: told me so last Sunday. Love! Am I to think of love, at my age? I thought it was all put away and done with. Sukey, forget what you have said. Don't raise up before me the vision of a life with such love as that. Let me go on having the child's childish affection and trust. It is all I am fit for. It is more than I deserve."

Hartley was not a demonstrative man. It was rare, indeed, that the outer crust of a good-natured cynicism was broken, and the inner possibilities laid open.

"Ask her, Hartley, if she can love you."

"No, no; and lose all that I have!"

"Shall I ask her, then?"

"You, my dear sister?" he replied, laughing. "He that cannot woo for himself is not worth being wooed for. No. Let things be as they are. Only I should like to see a way—"

"At any rate, there is no such great hurry."

"If she had any creative power, it might be worth while to make her a novelist. But she hasn't. She only imitates, like most of her sex—imitative animals. Man, you see, originates. Woman receives, assimilates, and imparts. In a higher state of civilization, women will be teachers in all the schools from Eton downwards. Flogging, I suppose, will then—"

"Hartley, do be consecutive."

"I've tried her at writing, and she really makes very creditable English verses. Her Latin verses are a failure, principally because she will not study the accuracies of language."

"You don't mean to say you have taught her Latin?"

"Why not? Of course I have. We read together portions of Horace, Ovid, Virgil, and other poets. Lollie is a very fair Latin scholar, I assure you. Well, I suggested that she should write a novel; and, after a great deal of trouble, we concocted a plot. That was last year. We went up the river, and elaborated it all one summer's afternoon. It was a capital plot. Three murders which all turned out to be no murders, a bigamy, and the discovery of a will in a bandbox, formed the main incidents. Unfortunately, we couldn't string it together. The result was not satisfactory; and we took it out one day, tied a great stone to it, and buried it solemnly above Teddington Lock. It lies there still, in a waterproof oilskin; so that when the river is dredged for treasure in a thousand years' time it may be found, and published as a rare and precious relic of antiquity. There we are, you see. We can't be literary or musical; our gifts and graces are so wholly receptive, that we cannot even become a strong-minded woman. What are we to do?"

"I'm sure I don't know. I only half understand what it all means."

"It means, Sukey, plainly, that the time is staring me in the face when I must do something for the child which will bring her

into the world, and—and—away from my old chambers, where the atmosphere, very good for children, may prove deleterious for a young woman."

"If she could be honourably married," said Sukey.

"I suppose," murmured her brother, "that would be the best thing." Then he shook himself together, and brightened up. "My dear sister, I never come here—it is wonderful to me why I come so seldom—without getting the solution of some of those problems which, as I am not a mathematical man, do sometimes so sorely worry me. Married, of course! She shall be married next week."

"But to whom, Hartley? Do not laugh at everything."

"Eh?" His face fell. "To be sure. I never thought of that. There is Jones—but he has no money; and, besides, I should certainly not let her marry Jones. And Lynn—but he is poorer than Jones, and I should not let *him* have my little girl. Then there is——. Sukey, you have floored one problem only to raise another and a worse one. To whom shall I marry her?"

He put on his hat, shook his head most mournfully, and went away. Next day he propounded some of his difficulties to Lollie.

"And so, after a long talk with my sister, the most sensible woman that at present adorns the earth, she gave me, Lollie, the answer to the question I have been troubling myself with for so long. She says, my child, that there is only one way: you must be comfortably and honourably married. Her very words."

"J, Mr. Venn?" The girl looked up and laughed in his face, with those merry blue eyes of hers. "What have I done that I must be married?"

"Don't raise difficulties, Lollie," he said, in a feeble way. "After all the trouble we had in getting Sukey to give us the right answer, too."

She laughed again.

"I suppose I am not to be married unless I like?"

"Why, no—I suppose not. No. Oh, certainly not. But you will like, won't you?"

"And who am I to marry?"

"Why, you see, Lollie—" He grew confidential. "The fact is, I don't know. Jones won't do."

"Oh, dear, no. He is too—too—undignified."

"Mr. Lynn?"

"Certainly not. Is there any one else?"

"Not at present, my child. But we shall see. Let us look around us. London is a great place. If London won't do, there is all England; besides the rest of Great Britain, Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the colonies."

"What does it all mean, Mr. Venn?" she asked, sitting at his feet on the footstool. "Last Sunday you were talking in the same strain. You are not going away, or anything, are you?"

He shook his head.

"I have not offended you, have I?"

He patted her cheek, and shook his head again.

"And you love me as much as always, don't you?"

"More, Lollie, more," he said, in a queer, constrained voice. But she understood nothing.

"Then, what is it? Do you think I am not grateful to you?"

"Don't, child—don't talk of gratitude."

"Do you think I do not love you enough? Oh, Mr. Venn, you know I do."

Perhaps it would have been well if he had spoken, then, the words which rose to his lips—

"It is that I think you can never love me as I love you—no longer as your guardian, but your lover; no longer as a child, but with the hungry passion of a man who has never known a woman's love, and yearns for your love."

But he was silent, only patting her cheek in a grave and silent way.

"Would you really like me to be married, Mr. Venn?"

He left her, and began walking about; for the spectre which he had deliberately refused to see stood before him now, face to face—the spectre of another feeling, newer, sweeter, altogether lovely. But he faced it still.

"Can there be a better thing for a girl than to be married, Lollie? I wish what is best for you."

"Would it be best for me to give up coming here every day?"

"No, child, no," he replied, passionately.

"Then why want me to?"

"It would break my heart not to see you here every day," he went on, not daring to look her in the face. "But—but—there are

other things. Lollie, I want you to be more happy during those long hours when you are not with me."

She turned red, and the tears came into her eyes.

"I have been, as usual, a selfish beast," he said. "I have only, since Sunday, realized in a small degree what a difference there is, of my making, between you and the people in whose midst you live. Lollie, you are a lady. Believe me, there is no girl in all England better educated than yourself. I think, too, there is no girl so beautiful."

She looked at him with surprise. He had never before even hinted at the possibility of her being beautiful.

"Am I really pretty? Oh, Mr. Venn, I am so glad."

"Mind," he went on, careful to guard against possible error, "I only *think* so. I've got no experience in these things, you know."

"Ah!" she replied. "And very likely you are mistaken. I suppose all girls like to be beautiful, do they not? And you are not in such a very great hurry to see me away, married, or anything else, are you?"

He smiled in his queer way. Hartley Venn's smile was peculiar to himself—at least, I never met anybody else with it. There was always a sort of sadness in the curve of his sensitive lips. He smiled with his eyes first, too, like the damsel in Chaucer.

"Hir eyen greye and glad also,
That laugheden ay in hire semblaunt,
First or the mouth by covenant."

"Not in a hurry at all, Lollie—only I thought we would talk things over some day. Now, let us do something. It is six o'clock. We will dine together, and go to the theatre. Shall we? Enough of sentiment, and of confidences enough. We will rejoice. What does Horace say?"

"Hic dies vere mihi festus—"

"That is delightful," said Lollie, clapping her hands. "When you begin to quote, I know you are happy again. Let us have no more talk of marrying, Mr. Venn. One thing, you know," she said, placing her hand on his arm—"I could never marry anybody but a gentleman; and as no gentleman will ever love me, why I shall never marry anybody at all; and we shall go on being happy together, you and I—"

"Il n'y a que moi qui ai ses idées là.
Gai la riette—gai, lira, lire."

And so, singing and dancing, she put on her hat and gloves, and taking Hartley's arm, went out to the restaurant which knew them well. As she passed through the portals of the dingy old inn, with her springing step and the laughing light of her happy face, the old porter rubbed his eyes, the policeman assumed an attitude of respectful attention, and the cads who loafed about for odd jobs became conscious of something in the world superior to beer and a dry skittle-ground. Whenever I meet a maiden happy in her beauty, methinks, in my mind's eye, I see again Aphroditê springing up anew from the ocean. Happy Aphroditê! She reigns by no virtue of her own. She is not wise, or strong, or prescient; she does not hold the thread of destiny; she is unconnected with the electric department; she has no control over the weather; she is not consulted in the distribution of wealth or honours; and yet she is Queen among goddesses, Empress over gods—*regina cæli*.

THE LAND AND LABOUR QUESTION IN A NEW LIGHT.

THE agricultural labourer has certainly upset some theories of political economists, in a manner most startling to any one who has the slightest belief in the wisdom of our leading lights in that excellent science. Agricultural labourers know nothing about political economy; but still it remains a fact that the arguments they have lately used have been distinguished by that most excellent feature, so often found absent in the arguments of their mental superiors—that of success. Political economists denounce strikes for various reasons. Men strike, and find that they obtain the objects that, according to their would-be teachers, they could never hope to attain. It certainly seems only fair, as the advocates of strikes among the poorer classes of unskilled labourers have proved in practice what has been shown to be impossible in theory, that we should examine their claims, and see if there be not something beneath the surface of those claims of the presence of which their own advocates do not know, though through its latent power they may prevail.

Professor Rogers, in his "Manual of Political Economy," the second edition of which was issued as late as 1869, discusses at length the effect of strikes among various

classes; and then goes on to state that one exception exists to all that he has laid down, and this exception is that a large class *cannot* strike; these, says the professor, are the agricultural labourers. His very words are, "We have seen that a very large class of labourers cannot combine for the purpose of aggrandizing themselves—these are the agricultural labourers." But time changes all things, even the opinions of professors: within three years we see the able and eloquent professor making a speech to an enthusiastic meeting at Oxford, in company with Mr. Arch and Mr. Taylor, the head officers and leading spirits of a great association for the aggrandizement of the agricultural labourer. We hear the eloquent professor talk about political economy, and we hear Mr. Arch say, in simple and touching language, that, after all, "we may be uneducated and ignorant, but still we are men." We hear the honest yeoman and the rhetorician state the same facts in different, very different, ways; and then, when we have heard that agricultural labourers are little better cared for than brute beasts, when men like Mr. Arch show us that there is a great deal of human nature even in an agricultural labourer, then we cannot help acknowledging that we have been stopping our ears too long against the voice of the oppressed labourers, that we have been weighing the meaning of long words and cogitating as to the problem suggested by words, mere words and theories, while the unfortunate objects of our deliberation have been trying to solve the problem of dragging out existence on an utter insufficiency. We confess then, and we think that every right-minded and right-thinking man must confess also, that the condition of the agricultural labourer is disgraceful to a Christian country. We say that all right-minded men should confess this, but they will not. Why? Because they have an instinctive idea that the malady and the remedy are inseparable; in other words, that they must approve the remedy suggested by the labourer—namely, that of organizing strikes—if they would wish to sympathize in his misfortunes. Not so: let us recognize the truth of what the agitators say—namely, that agricultural labourers are underpaid. Let us acknowledge that they have a right to strike to obtain an alleviation of their wrongs, even though by so doing they should inflict an injury on the community at large. Let us

acknowledge all this; and then, does it not suggest itself to the impartial thinker that there may yet be some other remedy to cure the disease than that which has lately been tried. There is one almost invincible argument used by the agitators—that their policy may be theoretically unsound, but that it succeeds. So much for that. Let us now consider if any remedy can be found which will take the place and do the work of the self-prescribed nostrum of Mr. Arch and his friends. Adam Smith held that political economy was the very soul of history; so let us examine history, and see if we can gain any clue to the solution of the problem.

About five centuries ago, or thereabouts, all Europe was afflicted with a most fearful plague, which, according to some accounts, took off half of the population. This estimate is probably an exaggerated one; but it is certain that the numbers carried off were large enough to cause, as Professor Rogers says, "a complete revolution in the tenure and cultivation of land." Labour, in consequence, became scarce; the supply was not equal to the demand; labour was scarce, and therefore dear. To protect themselves, the landowners were obliged to resort to defensive measures; for instance, they obtained enactments to the effect that wages should be at nearly the same rate as they were before the great plague, and that husbandmen and their children should be compelled to retain the occupation they had hitherto followed.

Afterwards Parliament stepped in, and first fixed certain rates of remuneration, and afterwards gave the requisite authority for so doing into the hands of the justices of the peace, who, as landowners, would naturally wish to keep the rate as low as possible. But legislation founded on an anomalous state of affairs can never be permanent; and so it was with the statistics affecting labour. As England recovered from the effects of the scarcity of labour consequent on the scanty population, the labourers acquired increased power daily; till at last, under Tyler, Oldcastle, and Cade, they succeeded in bettering their condition by vigorous agitation.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, however, owing to various causes—such as the adoption of sheep farming instead of corn-growing, the abolition of the monasteries and confiscation of church lands, and the depreciation in the value of money—all these causes, coupled with the growth of

population, led to the enactment of the Poor Laws, which tended to prevent the migration of labour, and thus indirectly to lower wages. The rise of the great manufactures in the North tended to modify the evils caused by these laws, but even the Statute of Labourers, which prevented the formation of any combination among farm labourers, was not repealed till 1825. Now that there is no restriction as to combinations, we see suddenly spring into life new associations called trades unions—bodies who hold the rod over employers, and, by threatening abstention from working, raise the price of their work. At this point we may notice the first error which creeps into the arguments of trades unionists. They strike against capital, so they say: the interest to which they are really opposed, though they seem to be ignorant of the fact, is that of the landowners. It stands to common sense that capital is but the intermediary between land and labour, and will withdraw itself, on the one hand, if it does not get its due interest; and is, on the other hand, always restricted to that due rate of interest by the claims of the landowner, who, by reason of the competition for land, is enabled to claim as rent all the surplus after the capitalist has remunerated himself for his risk, his personal services, and the use of his capital.

We are now able to investigate the effects of a strike which raises the price of labour.

First, we shall find that the loss in this case falls on the landowner; for as wages rise the expenses of the capitalist will be greater, and consequently the rent—*i.e.*, the surplus after he has paid himself for his risk, use of capital, &c.—which he can pay to the landowner is less in proportion. But there is a limit to this loss on the part of the landowner. If the rent of the land decreases till it barely covers the expenses it causes to the owner, he will withdraw his land from cultivation, in the same way that the capitalist withdraws his capital.

Secondly, the strikers suffer by the importation of labour from abroad, or by the importation of the necessaries the price of which is raised by their abstention.

Thirdly, if the agitators do, by striking, raise the price to be paid for the products of their labour—and this they can only do when the products of their labour are necessaries—the result is that they suffer more than any other class from the increased price

of these necessaries. If the articles produced by their labour be not necessaries, their object is defeated by the importation from abroad, or by the decreased use of the articles.

Strikes, it is clear, involve a dead loss; labour which would otherwise have been remunerative is temporarily stopped. But now the question again arises, "If the agricultural labourer is acknowledged by all to be in a most disgraceful and oppressed condition, why not admit the good of strikes if they relieve him at a trifling injury to the community?"

Now, we can answer the question. Strikes only seem to afford relief; they raise prices as well as wages. We must choose some plan which will not be open to this objection.

A vigorous advocate of the rights of labour has recently shown us practically how to meet the difficulty of establishing free trade in labour, which to all seems at once to suggest itself as the only means by which a just equilibrium can be obtained all over England between supply and demand. Canon Girdlestone, the reformer alluded to, seeing that many districts are crowded with ill-paid, under-fed, discontented labourers, persuaded them and helped them to migrate to other districts where labour was needed, and, in consequence, of greater value. The experiment, in spite of the outcry against it, was a perfect success. But this is only one way of several in which the difficulty may be met. First, the statutes which prevent free migration of labourers from one part of the country to another should be abolished; the Poor Laws especially, which only allow the poor of each parish to receive relief from their own particular parish, should be repealed. Secondly, migration from one part of the country ought to be sanctioned and promoted by Government means; and emigration should take place on an organized plan, that a guarantee might exist for the emigrant of good faith on the part of his employer. Thirdly, associations should be more generally formed in which the employed become capitalists on a small scale. Professor Rogers gives as an instance a colliery owned by Mr. Briggs, of Barnsley, which is conducted in such a way that the men employed participate in the profits. Such are, briefly, the three most noticeable remedies that can be administered for the maladies of the agricultural labourer. In any case, vio-

lence can do no good, especially in the hands of political agitators.

Trades unions have been styled associations in which ten per cent. of the members conspire to rob the other ninety percent. The Agricultural Labourers' Union can hardly merit this sarcasm. No one would ever accuse Mr. Arch and his friends of anything but the most manly and hard-hitting honesty; while straightforwardness and energy are the most salient points of Mr. Arch's character. It has been said before that these agitators have, up to the present time, while confessing that they are ignorant men, refused to acknowledge the theories of political economists; but it is refreshing to be able to give an incident which shows that no narrow-mindedness accompanies the ignorance which is the result of misfortune, and not of wilfulness or incapacity. The incident is, in brief words, that Mr. Arch the other day accepted, with many thanks and a professed determination to master the principles it contained, a copy of Mill's "Political Economy." May the result of this trifling incident be as important as the cause is trivial. In conclusion, let both sides be temperate, and justice and impartiality will be dealt to them both by the unprejudiced judgment of the whole community.

A PICNIC AT GOLCONDA.

"COULD we not manage to get up a picnic at Golconda?"

This question was asked one evening at a dinner party at Secunderabad, by a fair friend. It was unanimously voted a good idea, and arrangements were at once made to carry it out.

Where is Golconda? some of our readers will ask; others will have visions of diamond mines, and precious stones of all kinds; so it may be as well to inform the first and disabuse the last. It consists of a fortress and remains of a walled city, and a great number of magnificent tombs erected to the memory of Sultans, their Begums, and relations, who died many hundred years ago. It was the capital of what is now called the Nizam's dominions; but in the year 1590 the city became so crowded and unhealthy that it was determined to remove the seat of government to Hyderabad, or Bhagnugger as it was at first called, on the banks of the river Mussa. The reason that Golconda has always been erroneously associated with diamond mines

is, that it was the *dépôt* for the diamonds that were brought from Balaghaut and other districts, and cut for sale by the Golconda merchants. One thing we had not to take into consideration as we have to do in England when picnics are proposed, the weather. It was the end of the cool season of the year. No rain had fallen for several weeks, and a fine day was morally certain. It was agreed that we should all meet the next Thursday at the Hoosain Saugor Tank, a large sheet of water on the road to Hyderabad; that elephants should be waiting for us, and that we should arrive at Golconda in time for breakfast; then inspect the tombs, and after tiffin return to cantonments in time for dinner. Each was to bring a certain number of friends, and lists were made out of the provisions required. Tents were to be sent on the night before for the use of the ladies and gentlemen, and it was determined that breakfast and tiffin should be served in one of the largest tombs. Of all parties of pleasure, a picnic is, I think, about the most difficult to arrange so that everything passes off well, without a hitch. Every one should know and be friendly with one another—no easy matter, and particularly so in India, where there are so many petty jealousies and disagreements. Even supposing the gentlemen to be on the best of terms with one another, it is ten to one that the wives are so too; and it spoils the whole pleasure of the thing if there happens to be a squabble between the wife of a right wing officer of one regiment of native infantry and the wife of a left wing officer of another as to which is the *rankiest* lady. Then, the very last minute, a letter arrives saying that Mrs. Soandso can't come, as her dear little Freddy is so ill; that is followed by another note from Captain Dash, regretting that, as he has been unexpectedly put upon a court-martial, he will be prevented from being present. Then Colonel and Mrs. Currystuff send an excuse—the colonel has an attack of fever—and they return the list of their share of the provisions, which necessitates a fresh arrangement. These and twenty other little disagreeables are intensely aggravating. We found in this instance that there was no exception to the rule. However, at last everything was arranged, and at about half-past seven in the morning we found ourselves at the place of meeting. There, through the kindness of Sir Salar Jung, the Nizam's Prime Minister, eight or nine elephants were in waiting to convey us on to the tombs, a

distance of four miles, over a very bad road indeed. Several of our party elected to ride on horseback, as elephant-riding is a very back-aching, slow mode of progression. We altogether made up a party of twenty-five or thirty—a very good number, neither too large nor too small. Our road wound through a valley with rocks on each side, huge masses of granite piled one on another—a common feature of Deccan scenery. The natives have a curious tradition that these loose pieces of rock are the chips that were left after the creation of the world. Every now and then we passed through a toddy tope, or grove of palm trees, from which the toddy is extracted. An incision is made in the top, small earthen pots are attached, and the liquor, having dripped in, is collected in the morning—a pleasant enough drink before the sun is hot, but to be eschewed further on in the day, when it has begun to ferment. At length, at a turn in the path, a number of lofty domes appeared in sight in the distance, some of a snowy whiteness—others of a dark gray. After a quarter of an hour's further ride, we reached the base of the first tomb; here we found our servants waiting, the tents pitched, and everything in readiness for breakfast. This tomb contains the remains of Sultan Abdullah Qutub Shah and his wife, who reigned from A.D. 1626 to 1673. It is built on a large platform, about three hundred feet square and four feet high. It is a large square construction, with a lofty dome rising from its summit, and it is altogether in height about one hundred and twenty feet. Round the base is a piazza, supported on arches, the sides of which are about eighty feet. At each of the four corners minarets are placed, and the whole is ornamented with inscriptions from the Koran and flowers, all beautifully cut with that delicacy and patience for which Eastern workmen are so remarkable. Round the edge of the roof of the building, and also of the piazza, runs a parapet of open lattice-work of exquisite tracery. Three doors lead into the interior of the building, which consists of one large apartment open to the top of the dome. The floor is of polished granite, and in the centre is a low altar tomb, covered with Arabic characters, and surrounded with a wooden rail. Round the walls are several niches, used for holding oil lamps to be burnt in honour of the departed souls: they presented a very blackened appearance. The building shows signs of being partly un-

finished, as the beams left by the builders to support the scaffolding still remain inside and outside the dome, and the walls of the platform appear to have been never completed. The actual tomb of Sultan Abdullah is in a vault underneath. Our breakfast was laid out on the floor of the tomb, and after our long ride we found ourselves quite ready for it. Several natives who were about the place seemed by no means surprised, or even offended, at what it might be imagined they would consider a desecration of the place. We learnt subsequently that they thought the Sahibs were making a pilgrimage to the tombs; and were, I suppose, rather flattered than otherwise at the honour they thought we were paying to the mighty dead. However, they were very civil.

After breakfast was over we determined, before the sun became too powerful, to visit the other tombs; so we sallied forth, provided with large umbrellas. Opposite to the tomb we had breakfasted in is the fortress of Golconda. It is situated on a high, conical hill, and is, I believe, considered impregnable by the natives themselves. It evidently was the citadel where Golconda was inhabited; but of the town now only the bare walls remain. These are, however, kept in repair. On the walls of the fortress we could plainly distinguish several heavy pieces of cannon. We did not, however, attempt a close survey, as no one is allowed to approach the walls, and we had no desire to hear a bullet whiz uncomfortably close to our ears. I believe the fortress is used now as a State prison. They say the late Nizam kept a large quantity of his jewels here. No European has ever put his foot inside, with the exception, it is reported, of Sir Richard Temple, the present Minister of Finance to the Indian Government, and late British Resident at the Court of the Nizam, who, after a great deal of trouble, succeeded.

Close to our picnic tomb was a large unfinished mausoleum, which presented a peculiarly melancholy appearance. The dome is only partly built, and it is evident that a stop was put to the works in a hurry, as large masses of uncut stone are still to be seen lying around it. It was commenced by a Sultan called Thannah Shah, in the vain hope that a kind fate would allow him to sleep among the tombs of his fathers; but the invasion of Aurungzebe put a stop to the building. The majority of the tombs are enclosed by a low wall; they are between thirty and forty in

number, but as they are most of them so like one another, I will only describe two or three.

Passing through a gateway, and turning to the left, we came to a lofty tomb on a raised platform surrounded by a garden, planted with orange, pomegranate, lime, and palm trees. It belonged to a Sultan, Ibrahim Shah. The interior is very handsome. A steep staircase leads to a gallery round the dome, from which a beautiful view of the surrounding country is to be obtained. The outside has been entirely covered with enamel, in mosaic patterns; but very little remains to show its former brightness and beauty. I fear that time is not altogether to be blamed for this, though it has done much: pieces of the enamel lying about show signs that visitors have chipped them off to carry away. I am thankful to say that our party did not contribute to the destruction. I noticed that on many of the tombs the walls were scribbled over with the names of past generations of British snobs, who, even in this out-of-the-way place in the centre of Hindustan, could not refrain from hoping that by means of their execrable handwriting they might be able to hand down to posterity their vulgar names. Native gentlemen, too, seem to have followed the Sahibs' bad example, as several Mohammeds, Ibrahams, &c., were scratched in Arabic letters on the walls and pillars. At the extreme end of this Oriental Westminster Abbey were two tombs, the history of whose occupants I cannot refrain from mentioning. One is a small but beautifully finished tomb, with a fluted dome. It is erected over the grave of a Sultan Kuli, who reigned in Golconda from 1512 to 1543. He was murdered in the Musjid (or Mohammedan place of worship) within the town where, in fear of assassination, he had taken refuge. The old man was in the act of directing masons to break open a door of escape, when he was stabbed by a Turkish slave, at the instigation of his son Jumsed. Close by is a low, square block of masonry, without dome or ornament of any kind, covered with weeds and rank grass. The arched doorway was at first blocked up, but is now partly broken open. On looking in, for the opening was not sufficiently wide to allow me to enter, I perceived, in the semi-darkness, a low, narrow chamber, in which was a rough stone slab, apparently without any inscription; this marks the resting-place of the son, Jumsed.

He ascended the throne after the murder of his father and elder brother. He afterwards committed great atrocities, and caused the death of many persons in moments of passion. His end was horrible. There was a revolt; he was seized and buried alive, in punishment for his crimes. The Nizam's Government is gradually repairing the tombs; several have been restored, with great care and at a large expense. The one that has been covered with enamel they will be able to do nothing to, with the exception of keeping it from falling into utter decay, as the art of this kind of enamelling has passed away. The gardens, also, are kept up at the expense of the Government.

After we had visited most of the tombs, the sun was pretty high in the heavens, and we were very glad to turn our steps back to the picnic tomb. Some of our party remained behind to sketch, under the shelter of some friendly mango trees, whose thick foliage kept out to a great extent the piercing rays of the tropical sun. Cards, draughts, and backgammon amused others till the hour of tiffin arrived. The inside of the tomb in which we were was delightfully cool, owing to the thickness of the walls and the piazza outside, which kept out the great glare; and we agreed unanimously that many worse places might be easily selected than the interior of a Sultan's tomb. The hour for lunch at last arrived, for which I think none of us were very sorry. Nothing had been forgotten, wonderful to say—not even the salt; and there was ice in abundance. So, with Moselle, hock, and claret cup, to say nothing of Bass, we were as comfortable as need be under existing circumstances; and the domed roof of the old building rang again with merry voices, enough to have caused the old Sultan and his Begums, who slept below, to turn in their graves at the sanctity of their last resting place being so desecrated by infidel dogs.

After tiffin was over, it was proposed that we should descend into the crypt and visit the actual tombs of Sultan Abdullah and his wife. Lanterns were procured, and we armed ourselves with stout sticks, having a wholesome dread of snakes. The entrance, which had only of late years been broken open, was under the steps that led up to the platform. For the first twenty yards or so we were obliged to stoop very low indeed, the

passage being little more than four feet high. Bats in scores came flying against us, disturbed by the unwonted glare of our lights. Soon the ceiling rose in height sufficient to allow us to stand upright—a great comfort, as there is nothing so unpleasant as groping one's way along, nearly on all fours, a dark passage.

At last we reached a large vaulted chamber, supported by several massive pillars. Our few lights barely sufficed to allow us to see in the gloom two altar tombs of white marble, placed side by side. There was little or no carving about them, or inscriptions of any kind.

A very sensational tale is told of an adventure that took place some time ago in this dark crypt. A large picnic party had been given in the hall above; everything had hitherto passed off well; tiffin was over, and several very promising flirtations had been going on. For a wonder there were four or five unmarried young ladies—or “spins,” as they are called in the sunny East—of the party. A certain major had been making the running with one of them, the daughter of an officer high up in the service, when, in an unlucky moment, it was proposed—in the same way it was with us—that a visit should be paid to the vault. Up to the moment of leaving it, everything had gone on well—no cobras had been met with, no heads broken against the roof. The major and his young lady remained till the last; the lights had gone on in front, and they were nearly in total darkness. “Now or never,” thought the gallant officer, and he immediately implanted a loving kiss on what he imagined the lovely face of his *chère amie*; but, fearful to relate, instead of hearing—as perhaps he expected—a gentle remonstrance, which would have sanctioned a repetition of the offence, a loud laugh woke the echoes of the vault, and a gruff voice was heard to exclaim—“Why, man, what on earth are you doing with my head?” The colonel's bald head had received the chaste salute intended for the daughter's fair lips. Nothing was left for the unfortunate man but to rush out and sneak off home. It was a long time ere he heard the last of his little mistake. Moral: beware who and what you kiss in the dark. However, none of our party met with any such adventure—we only came out looking very dirty and dusty.

After having had coffee and cheroots—

the sun by this time being well down—the howdahs were again put on the elephants, and we returned to cantonments, after having agreed that we had had a very pleasant day at Golconda, the City of the Dead.

THY WORK IS DONE.

THE sunlight sheds its glory
About the city's ways,
And joy and peace and gladness
Catch life beneath its rays.
But in a bleak, cold garret,
What sees the noontide sun?
One working, wan and weary,
Her work is not yet done.

And when the shadows gather
There, by the moon's soft light,
She plies her task—but hearken!
Strange voices of the night!
They seem to whisper round her—
“Rest thee, thy crown is won:
Soon shalt thou rest from labor,
Soon shall thy work be done.”

And in the morn's glad sunlight
She lay there cold and dead,
To the great God who gave it
Her weary soul had fled.
She heard the angels singing
From ways beyond the sun—
“Come home, come home to Heaven,
Rest thee, thy work is done!”

GORDON CAMPBELL.

A WAITER'S ROMANCE.

BY SIR CHARLES LAWRENCE YOUNG.

A NASTY, cold, raw night. There had been a heavy yellow fog all day; but as dusk came on the wind arose and blew the horrid shroud away, and gave us citizens of London a chill, pitiless rain instead—a small, icy rain, which evidently entertained the most contemptuous opinion of umbrellas, for it drove in underneath them in gusty squalls, and danced about your eyes and ears in a familiar manner which was most unpleasant. I had, on this particular evening, been engaged much later than usual at my office in the City, and I had to fight my way westward against this driving storm; and how I should then have envied present times could I have foreseen an underground railway and its inestimable blessings! Such an idea would have been considered as almost impious in the period to which I am now alluding, and we had to content ourselves with the stuffy omnibuses and the stuffier cabs. Preferring my own legs to either of these means of conveyance, I battled my way bravely through Cheapside, St. Paul's—

churchyard, and down Ludgate-hill; but when fairly in Fleet-street my courage failed, and I sincerely wished my club was on the east side of Temple Bar. The fact was I had had a great deal of work to do all day, and had barely had any time for luncheon, and was almost in a starving condition; and although the luxuries and comforts of my club were vividly before my mind's eye, I involuntarily paused when half-way up Fleet-street, and determined that I would get my dinner at once, feeling sure that when that meal was concluded I should think but little of the cold and rain. I suddenly remembered a tavern hard by, which a few years before, when occupying chambers in the Temple, I had been accustomed to frequent; and I resolved to renew my acquaintance with the chops and stout for which that same tavern had once had an almost unrivalled reputation. A few minutes' more struggling with the elements brought me to it; and passing through a well-remembered archway, I found myself in the old coffee-room.

For old it unquestionably was. There was an air of Johnson, Boswell, Goldsmith, and the giants of that generation about it. The ghosts of heavy and unpractical politicians seemed to hover about, and a sense of ponderous literature and unsuccessful poets was not wanting; to say nothing of the more immediate fragrance of cheese and steaks and large potatoes. What countless hungry stomachs had been satisfied, or dissatisfied, across those ancient table cloths, I wondered? How many thirsty throats had gulped down rivers of ale and stout out of those well-worn tankards? But such antiquarian considerations were rather beside my purpose. I—a not unimportant unit, I fancied—wanted something to restore my wasted tissues; so I at once demanded the bill of fare of the one venerable waiter who, as I entered, I saw slumbering peacefully beside the fire. No one else was in the coffee-room. The last of the habitual diners had paid his reckoning an hour before, and I was in undisturbed possession. I recognised the ancient attendant at once. I had contemplated him with curiosity, not to say reverence, years before, when, as a very youthful barrister, I had imagined fondly that the bench or woolsack, or at least the coif, were within an easy grasp. Time had changed my prospects and profession, but apparently had not much altered old William's views of life. The white tie, the greasy

tail-coat, the customary napkin that he bore upon his arm, were much the same as ever, and carried no symptoms of revolutionary ideas.

"William," said I, "what can I have for dinner?"

"What would you prefer, sir?" (The old stereotyped reply.)

"Well, what have you got?" Old formula, too.

"Chop, sir—steak, sir—roast fowl, sir. There's a cold veal and 'am pie—and a nice cold sirloin."

Oh, constitutional proprietor! Not a vestige of change in the time-honoured bill of fare.

"I think I should like a nice tender steak, William, with a fried potato and an onion or two about it."

"Yes, sir; ready in a quarter of an hour, sir."

And William shuffled off and gave the order.

The quarter of an hour was, to a hungry man, an unusually long one; but at the expiration of two and twenty minutes it came to an end, and the waiter placed before me a steak such as never can be got for love or money outside a London tavern. Into the details of my meal, however, I need not enter; they obviously concerned myself alone. Suffice it to say that I felt extremely happy and comfortable at the conclusion of my repast, and did not feel particularly inclined to brave the misery of the streets again. The thoughtful William suggested a good reason why I should tarry a little longer. Would I like a pint of fine East Indian sherry? I should indeed, if I could get it. I could get it, and if was not as fine a wine as ever I tasted, William would undertake to pay for it, and drink it, bottle, cork, and all. This guarantee was sufficient; and when the wine made its appearance and I had tasted it, I felt something more than satisfied.

Not unnaturally, I grew conversational. It was evident, from the deserted appearance of the small bar at the entrance of the coffee-room, that no more guests were expected. William drew a remarkably hard arm-chair close to the fire for me, and we fell into conversation.

William must have been here a good many years? Well, yes, he had. He was not so young as he used to be. Not that it was his fault, certainly not; that was a misfortune

we all were liable to. But William had been in many other situations beside this, I dared say?

Yes, that he had, indeed; and once in an uncommonly unpleasant situation? Indeed! Might I ask what that was?

"Well, you see, sir, it was that unpleasant, that for a long time I never much cared to think about it. It aint a nice thing, sir, for a man to be suspected of murder—or at least of manslaughter."

"Certainly not," I assented, "far from it. You don't mean to say that you have ever been in that predicament, William?"

"Ah! I have indeed, sir. I was once very near having to stand in the felon's dock—as near as a toucher."

"If it is not painful to you to recall it, I own I feel curious to hear all about it. Order yourself a glass of whatever you like best, William, and tell me the story."

William's fancy took the form of whisky and water, and he proceeded as follows:—

"A goodish many years ago, sir, when I was nat'rally younger than I am now, I was a waiter at a West-end club. I have been a following this calling on and off all my life. I began as a page to an old lady as soon as I was big enough to go into buttons. My father has been in the line before me, and he thought that waiting was the only respectable calling there was. Nobody could wait, I've heard tell, like him. He was a stoutish man, much as I am now, but he never panted, and he never wore creaky shoes, and was never known to knock one plate up against another, or jingle the glasses on the sideboard. Well, he trained me up very particular and careful, and when my first missis died, I easily got another place as page; when I got too big for that sort of work, they took me on at a club where my father had been, and there I stayed for a long time. When I was two-and-twenty I married, and me and my wife kept lodgings down in Westminster, and we managed to get on pretty well, considering."

"One night, soon after Parliament met, in February it was, there had been a great many gentlemen dining and supping, and we were kept up very late, and I did not start to go home till nigh upon half-past two in the morning. It was a bitter night, much the same as this night is, a cold wind and a driving rain, and my great coat was scarcely as thick as could be wished, and by the time I got near home I was pretty well wet through. However, my wife was a careful woman, and

I knew I should find a drop of warm water ready to hand, and something to put in it—much the same as what I have got here now, sir, I thank you kindly—and I didn't mind being a little moist. When I was within a few hundred yards of our house, I came upon a woman all crouching in a heap, as it were, upon a doorstep. I was tolerably used to such sights in our parts, and I passed by without paying much attention, and probably should never have looked round at her again, but that I thought I heard her give a long sad moan. Such a moan, sir, on such a night as that, in a place where professional beggars knew better than to come, made me stop and turn back to her. The casual ward aint a pleasant place, sir, I'm mostly told, but it must be better than a cold flag on a winter's night, I thought; and in a few words I told the poor thing she had better by far go there."

"She looked up at me then, sir, and I thought at the time I had never seen such a face as that before. I don't rightly know as I am much of a judge of beauty, but I have seen many a face in my time—among the highest of this land, and others too—and I never saw such an uncommon one as that. And I could tell, too, that the streets hadn't always been the home of such as her."

"'I'd rather die where I am,' she said; and she hid her face again in the thin white hands, and seemed to take no further notice of me."

"Well, I couldn't let her be, sir, could I? My own home, as I have said, was close at hand. So, after thinking a minute or two, I spoke to her again."

"'Look'ee here, ma'am; I aint a going to leave you here to die—as die you must if you spend the night in this merciless cold; and if you won't take the accommodation as is provided for you by the parish—and I own I don't think much of it—why, you just come along with me. I am a poor man, but I can give you shelter for the night, and may be you can get to your friends in the morning.'"

"Her only answer was a shaking of her head."

"'Now, it aint no sort of use your going on in that way,' I continued; 'God Almighty didn't give you your life for nothing, and you mustn't throw it away for want of a shelter and food. Get up, there's a good creature, and come along with me. I have a wife at home who will say I have done right in

bringing you there out of this bitter cold. Come.'

"I had to use a great deal of persuasion, sir; she kept her head buried in her hands a long time, and moaned out over and over again, 'No—no. Let me be—let me be.' But I always was a remarkably obstinate man when once I'd got a thing in my mind, and at last I prevailed upon her to rise to her feet, and I supported her to my house.

"Martha,' says I, as my wife opened the door, 'don't you bother with any questions just this minute, but make a cup of hot tea for this poor woman. She's almost dying of cold and hunger.'

"Well, sir, there never was a kinder soul than my Martha; and after a look at that sad white face, and a feel of those chilled thin hands, she blew up the fire, and had the kettle boiling before you could count ten. Before you was anything like at twenty, she'd pulled a horsehair sofa, as I had bought a bargain a week before, round to the fire, and put the poor thing upon it comfortable. Then she pulled off the ragged muddy boots, and chafed the icy feet, and wrapped them up in warm flannel. By that time the tea was ready, and I give her some, and you could see she was a coming round fast.

"I aint done wrong in bringing her here, old woman?" says I in a whisper.

"No, you aint, William," she replies, likewise in a whisper: she was fond of her Bible, was Martha, and I heard her mutter, 'A stranger, and ye took me in!' I am not tiring you, sir, with this little story of mine?—for there is more to tell."

"Not at all, William," I answered. "Go on, I want to hear it to the end."

"There is no need for me to go into unnecessary details, sir. I think we housed her and fed her for about three days. As she got better and talked a little, we both could see that she was not at all of our station in life—in fact, she seemed quite a lady. But she never breathed a word of her story, or gave the slightest hint as to how she had come to be in such misery as I had found her in. On the evening of the third day, Martha told me when I came home, she had suddenly got off the sofa where she had been mostly lying while she had been with us, and said—

"I am quite well now. I have burdened you long enough, kind souls. I am going away now."

"Martha begged and prayed her to stop at least till the next morning, but she firmly

refused. She was strong and well, she said; we need have no fear for her, all her weakness had passed; she could take care of herself now. And after making Martha write down my name and address upon a piece of paper, which she carefully concealed in her dress, she left the house.

"We talked about her often afterwards, Martha and me, and wondered what had become of her.

"Martha declared she had friends, for she felt sure she was a real lady, although she had never said a word about herself; indeed, she scarcely talked at all while she was with us, and there was nothing by which we might guess her name.

"Three or four years passed away, and one night—it was nigh about Christmas time, and there was not much doing at the club—I got leave to go away early, and I took Martha to the play. We was in the pit: Mr. Keeley played that night one of his best parts, and I remember I was laughing fit to split my sides, when suddenly Martha said to me quite serious—

"Look up at that large box, William, to the right."

"I looked up at the box she directed me to. There was three handsomely dressed ladies sitting in front, and some gentlemen behind.

"Well, my dear,' says I, 'they are very pretty, but they aint so interesting as old Keeley on the stage!' and I turned my eyes away again.

"You must be getting blind, William,' says Martha, impatiently, 'or your memory's weak. Look at the lady at the corner nearest the stage—her with the large fan.'

"Then I looked attentively, for Martha seemed strangely excited.

"Why, it's never—" I began.

"Hush!" said Martha, seizing my arm pretty sharp. 'Don't draw attention. It is her.'

"Yes, sir, there was no mistake about it. The lady in the corner of the box was her as I had brought home that cold night. She as was now so grandly dressed, with sparkling jewels round her neck, and in the company of lords and ladies—for I recognised one nobleman as was a member of our club, and I knew his lady by sight—was the same as I had found almost in rags upon a doorstep at midnight.

"As you may suppose, I could not help looking up at her pretty often. Whether she

saw us or not I cannot say, but the very next day there came a letter for me, and when I opened the envelope I found wrapped in a piece of paper a bank note, value one hundred pounds. On the paper there was written one word, 'Silence.'

"Well, sir, very soon after this I had reason to leave London altogether. The fact was, a man as had been head waiter in the club had scraped together a goodish bit of money, and he married, and took an hotel in a large town in the Midland Counties; he and me had always been good friends, and he offered me the place of head waiter there, and I gladly took it. Martha and one or two of the children were ailing, and the pay was better than I had been receiving, and I thought it would be better for all of us; so away we went. And for five years everything went prosperous.

"There was races held twice a year at this town as I am speaking of; and though for a long time they had been but small affairs, the neighbouring gentry began to patronize them more, and at the end of the five years I mentioned, they had become important to them as was on the turf. Our hotel was the head-quarters of all the racing swells as come down. These races was held in the autumn and in the early spring; more people generally came to the spring meeting, because at that time there was a large ball always in the town hall, and the gentry in the neighbourhood used to fill their houses for it, and we at the hotel had plenty of work to do by reason of the visitors. And towards the end of one particular March we was very full indeed. All the rooms upon the first floor, with the exception of two, was taken for a party of ladies and gentlemen as was coming from London; these other two was engaged by a foreign gentleman as was much upon the turf, and had come to us regular for the races for the last two years. None of us could ever pronounce his name correctly, and he was generally known as the Count.

"Well, sir, the party of ladies and gentlemen come down on the Tuesday afternoon. The ball was to take place that night. The Count come down by a later train, only just in time for dinner, and he was alone; and though he was going to the ball as well as the rest, he seemed to have no friends there, and took his dinner by himself. And I thought at first it was as well he did so, for he did not seem to be in a particularly good humour.

Nothing pleased him, and he swore at me, and at the landlord, and at the cook, and seemed to be in a nervous and irritable state of mind. I had never seen him like this before, and we all supposed he was likely to lose on the races. He was a fine, handsome man, and, generally speaking, his manner was pleasant and polite to everybody. He did not dine till very late, and consequently I was able to give him my undivided attention, as all the other dinners were nearly over.

"I had previously been waiting with my men upon the large party on the same floor that I have spoken of. One lady of the party, it appeared, had excused herself from dinner, as she was tired, and wanted to rest herself before the ball, and she had tea taken to her room. The room this lady occupied was nearly opposite the Count's sitting-room.

"The Count, as I have said, seemed very irritable. He could hardly sit still at dinner, and he ate but little; but he made up in the drinking line, I assure you, sir. Once he made me open the window, as the place seemed so oppressive; five minutes afterwards he told me to shut it, as the air chilled him to the bone. Twice or three times during the course of dinner he rose from his seat, and paced up and down the room, muttering to himself in a foreign language.

"When I had put the cheese on, I went out to fetch some more bread, and left the door ajar. I ran down the stairs, and soon returned with the bread. As it happened, I didn't come up as quick as I went down, and I was always remarkable for the softness of my tread—a great quality in a waiter, I do assure you, sir—and so it was that when I reached the landing I stopped short, for I saw a lady gazing in through the half-open door. The Count's back was towards the door, but his face was clearly reflected in a mirror opposite to him, and at this the lady was apparently gazing. From my position I could not see her face; but I noticed that she was tall, and wore a magnificent ball dress. There was something about her—I couldn't then for the life of me say what it was—that made me pause, and strangely wish to see her features. Then the Count violently struck a little hand-bell which was on the table, and the lady started away, and turned into the room which was almost opposite. I thought as I entered the Count's apartment

that that must be the lady who was too tired to join her party at dinner.

"How bad the attendance is!" exclaimed the Count in a loud voice; "how long you have been getting a piece of bread! There, fetch me biscuits and a pint of the golden sherry—you know which I mean—and be quick."

"I hurried out again, this time closing the door behind me. I got the wine as speedily as possible, and rushed upstairs with it. As my hand was on the door, I remembered that I had forgotten the biscuits. I hastily put the sherry upon a marble slab there was on the landing, and ran downstairs again. In three minutes I was up again with the biscuits, and as I gained the landing, I just caught a glimpse of a lady's skirt disappearing into the room opposite the Count's, and I heard the door close very softly.

"That will do," said the Count, as I placed the wine and biscuits before him. 'Let a fly be at the door in half an hour, and come and tell me when it is ready.'

"All our other guests were beginning to start for the ball when I left the Count. The party on the first floor had ordered three flies, and I was standing in the hall when the two first lots went off. There was a lady and gentleman left, and I wondered why they didn't get into the other fly which was waiting, and follow the rest of the party; when I heard the lady say in reply to a remark the gentleman had made, I supposed—

"Oh, she will be here in a moment; she is quite well now, and anxious to go."

"There was a rustling of silks upon the stairs, and a lady came into the hall. I thought I could not mistake the figure nor the dress—it was the lady I had seen looking curiously into the Count's apartment. Ah, sir, have you guessed it? Now that I saw her face—so pale, yet so majestic—I knew that I had seen it before. Here again before me was the woman I had once brought to my poor home upon a cold winter's night. Her eyes, as she passed though the hall, never once met mine, and she silently followed the others into the carriage."

"At the expiration of the half-hour I went up to tell the Count that his fly was ready. I knocked at the door—once—twice: there was no answer. I entered, and found him lying dead upon the floor.

"There was an inquest, of course, and it

was discovered that the sherry I had brought him—of which he had drunk two-thirds—was poisoned—yes, sir, poisoned!

"The bottle had been opened by the landlord in the presence of myself and one or two other waiters, and we had seen him draw off a pint into a decanter. The remaining portion of the bottle was tested, and was found quite pure. The poison must have been put in after that pint had come into my hands. Either I had wilfully put it in, or the Count had committed suicide. I stated that I had placed the decanter on the slab outside the room for a minute or two, when I ran back for the biscuits—and this was all I had to say; and the absence of all possible motive on my part for committing such a crime acquitted me, and the jury found that the Count had destroyed himself in a fit of madness.

"Do you ask me, sir, if I agreed in that verdict? I have never been able to give a satisfactory answer even to myself. But I am terribly inclined to think that he was murdered. I cannot resist the conviction that he was the man who originally wronged the woman I found upon the cold doorstep in Westminster; that, though she recovered her position by marrying a rich old nobleman, she never forgave the man who did her cruel wrong, and that she revenged herself in this awful manner.

"No, I have never seen her again. I know that on her return from the ball—pale and stately as I had seen her go—she never went to bed, and left the hotel early the next morning. Of course, sir, my suspicions may be wrong. I do not think they are."

"And this strange story is the dark piece of romance in your life, William?"

"Yes, sir, it is."

"WRITTEN WITH A PURPOSE."

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

MY DEAR SIR—I have just received yours of yesterday, enclosing a communication addressed to you by a gentleman who writes on behalf of the Commissioners of her Majesty's Customs, and referring to an article called "Written with a Purpose," contributed by me to ONCE A WEEK, and published in the issue of that magazine dated November 9th. As you seem to be of opinion that the communication requires an answer, I sit down, out of courtesy to you, to reply to it. Otherwise, the said com-

munication is not one of which I should consider it necessary to take any notice.

I am accused of preferring "a very serious charge against the officers of Customs at Liverpool," which charge "the Board are fully persuaded is unjustifiable." I have actually had the temerity to impugn the integrity of that high-souled, public-spirited, immaculate body of men who are deputed to inspect the trunks and luggage of foreigners upon their arrival in this country. I have stated that upon my disembarkation at Liverpool I received "an unmistakable hint," and that upon slipping half a crown into the hand of the person whose duty it was to inspect the contents of my trunks, I was permitted to re-lock the trunks without inspection.

Can it be possible that the Commissioners of her Majesty's Customs are serious when they profess to doubt the truth of what I have stated? Can it be possible that they are ignorant in a matter respecting which it so imperatively behoves them to be well informed? If so, I would most emphatically suggest to the said Commissioners the propriety of resigning their official positions with the least possible delay, and giving place to better men. It will scarcely be possible, I imagine, for her Majesty to find any one else in the three kingdoms who is ignorant of the unenviable notoriety which these Liverpool officials have acquired as participators in the infamous gratuity system. Had I thought proper to do so, I might have gone much more minutely into details, and written with a much greater degree of acrimony than I did. I might have alluded to more than one friend and acquaintance of mine who has been put to delay and inconvenience in consequence of his determination not to yield to the tacit importunities of the Custom House servants. I have only landed at the port of Liverpool twice in my life, but on both occasions have I been compelled to choose between espousing the gratuity system, and being kept cooling my heels in the Custom House shed for half an hour or more. A gentleman who happens to be accompanied by his wife and little ones will have no hesitation in choosing the former alternative.

The communication continues in this strain:—"Considering the large number of officials employed at Liverpool, there *may* be *one*" (the italics are mine) "who has misconducted himself in the manner indi-

cated." This method of putting the matter will provoke a smile from American tourists. There *MAY* be *ONE*! What a magnanimous concession on the part of the Commissioners of her Majesty's Customs! It would be much more to the purpose to say that there *MAY* be *ONE* who has *NOT* so misconducted himself. Far be it from me to assert that there are no honest men among the Liverpool Custom House officials. For all I know to the contrary, there may be *one*, or even *two*. But I here beg to record my sincere conviction—a conviction in which nine out of every ten American travellers in England will fully bear me out—that such officials are as few as were righteous men in the Cities of the Plain. There may be *ONE*? It is as who should say, "Considering the large number of people in London, it is just possible that there may be one Englishman among the number."

Finally, I am informed that the Board will feel greatly obliged if I will consent to come forward to identify the recipient of my gratuity. That is to say, the Board will consider it in the light of a favour if I will do so. Now, it is certainly something new in my experience to have a request for a personal favour prefixed by a personal insult. Only a few lines before soliciting this favour, the Board have expressed their conviction that the charge I have brought is unjustifiable—*i. e.*, that I have written what is untrue. But, apart altogether from the insult, I should decline the honour of gratuitously constituting myself an approver on behalf of her Majesty's Customs. As a professional writer for the press, I am prepared to exercise all proper and honourable means for the suppression of what I, in common not only with Americans, but with all right-thinking Englishmen, regard as a public nuisance and a national reproach. But there are limits even to *my* enthusiasm on behalf of the public and the nation; and I have no ambition to play the *rôle* of a common informer. Nor is there the slightest necessity for such a proceeding on my part. If the Board are really sincere in their professions of anxiety to stamp out the iniquity, let them send an authorized agent for one single trip, and I am much mistaken if it will be necessary to repeat the experiment. Or, better still, let them pay each one of their miserable, half-starved servants a salary sufficient to enable him to live with some degree of comfort, and to relieve him from

the necessity or excuse for levying black-mail upon travellers. This, and a few other simple and obvious measures, will no doubt remove the stigma; and should such a consummation take place, I shall feel that the "Purpose" with which I wrote the article in question has been, at least in some measure, accomplished.

In conclusion, Mr. Editor, I beg to say that, if you have not already done so, you have my full and free consent to furnish my name and address to the secretary of her Majesty's Customs.—I am, dear sir, faithfully yours,

THE AUTHOR OF "WRITTEN
WITH A PURPOSE."

Dec. 18, 1872.

TABLE TALK.

THE little affair with the gas stokers is no sooner settled than we are threatened with the prospect of something much more alarming than being left in the dark. The railway servants of all grades, on every line except the Great Northern and the Midland, are very dissatisfied with two rather important conditions of their service—hours of labour and pay for the same. It would be a pretty state of things if people who had left home for their Christmas holidays could not return to their several callings, because these discontented railway employés had chosen to follow the universal fashion of the day, and had "struck." It is comforting to learn on authority that, "although the organization of the railway men is so perfect that—were they so maliciously inclined—they could in a few hours put a complete stop to railway locomotion in nearly every part of England, they will never—no matter what may be the provocation—attempt to make use of a power so dangerous, because they believe that legitimate ends and a just cause are best promoted by legitimate means." The fact that they possess a "perfect organization" is in itself a source of anxiety, as we don't know when some ill-advised act of the directors may haply make their subordinates "maliciously inclined." That the men have a grievance we have no doubt. They are overworked, and their pay is often insufficient to provide for their reasonable wants. Everybody wishes to see the end of this state of things; but it is high time the public struck against the system of strikes, and

induced Parliament to provide a Court of Appeal in which both Labour and Capital could feel confidence. It must come to this at last.

IT IS WITH pleasure that we notice that MM. Valnay and Pitron, for many years associated with the late M. Raphael Felix in his management of the St. James's Theatre, have opened the Royalty for a winter season of French plays. Later in the season, Mdle. Aimée Desclée and M. Lafont are to appear; and after Easter the plays will be given at the Princess's. At present the company is very good. M. Schey, who was one of the old company at the St. James's, Mdle. Therval, and M. Leprévost have appeared with success in "Les Femmes qui Pleurent," a lively little comedy, adapted to the English stage for the late Frank Matthews, under the title of "Bristol Diamonds."

AT THE ROYALTY, the entertainments are to be of a light kind chiefly—comedy and vaudeville; but when the management removes to the Princess's, the comedies and opera bouffes now most popular in Paris are to be given on a liberal scale. We wish MM. Valnay and Pitron a success we think there can be no doubt they will gain. The French drama may now be regarded as acclimatized here.

THE POISONING of judges and magistrates, and all persons habitually engaged in that part of the administration of the law of England which is carried on in courts, is being prosecuted with spirit as usual. The *City Press* says—"At present the atmosphere of the justice-room at the Mansion House is simply poisonous, and some of the officials who have to stand it day after day have suffered in consequence. It is simply a question of money: there ought to be no difficulty about it." Will not the corporation of the city of London take the matter in hand, and set the country an example?

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The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

ONCE A WEEK

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No. 263.

January 11, 1873.

Price 2d.

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A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER VII.



HE days passed on, and Lollie thought no more of her champion. But Philip thought of her; and, when he took his walks abroad, more often than not bent his steps down Oxford-street and Holborn, praying silently that he might chance upon her again. He might have walked up and down Holborn for ever on the chance of seeing her again, and yet missed her altogether. But one day, thinking of something else, he was walking round a square in Bloomsbury, when, raising his eyes from the ground—I believe he was thinking of his bets—he saw the maiden of his exploit tripping along a few yards before him. There was no mistaking her. She came along, with a light, elastic step, full of youth and health, with her frank,

sweet face, her deep blue eyes, and her tall, lithe figure: only by day she looked ten times as well as by night.

She, too, saw him, and blushed.

Philip took off his hat. She hesitated a moment, and held out her hand.

"I ought to thank you properly," she said. "I was very much frightened."

Philip took her hand, and turned. The girl went on, and he with her. You see, it was one of the radical defects of her education that she positively did not know the dreadful "wrongness" of letting a man, not properly introduced, speak to her and walk with her.

"I shall tell Mr. Venn I met you," she said. "He will be glad. Come and see him yourself, for him to thank you."

"May I ask—excuse me, but I do not know Mr. Venn."

"He is my guardian. I am going to him now. He lives in Gray's Inn."

It seemed strange to the girl that all the world did not know Mr. Venn.

Philip did not know what to say. As he walked along by her side, he turned furtive glances at her, drinking in the lines of beauty of her face and form.

"Do you live near here?"

"No—I am here by accident. I am living in St. James's-street, in lodgings. I am on leave from my regiment."

"I don't think," said Lollie, "that I should much like to be an officer." She always took the male point of view, from habit. "I should like best to be a writer, a dramatist, or perhaps a barrister. But I should like to wear the uniform. Once I saw a splendid review at Windsor, when the Viceroy of Egypt was here. Are you in the cavalry?"

"No. I am in the line."

"Why do you not go into the cavalry? It must be delightful to charge, with all the horses thundering over the ground. Do you like your profession?"

"Yes—yes. I suppose so—as well as anything."

"You know," said the girl, "it is absurd for a man to take up with a thing, and then take no interest in it. I should like something I could throw my whole heart into."

"I could only throw my whole heart away upon one thing," Philip replied, softly, and with a half-blush; for he was afraid he was making a foolish observation.

"What is that? If I were you, I should take it up at once."

"I could only throw my whole heart away—upon a woman."

Laura received the remark as one of profound philosophical importance.

"That is a very curious thing. Not a right thing at all. I should think it would be so much better to put your heart into work."

"Tell me," said Philip, in a half-whisper, "do you not think love a worthy object of a man's life?"

"I really do not think anything about it," said the girl. "And now I must leave you, because I am going down here, and so to the Inn. Won't you come in and be thanked by Mr. Venn?"

"No, it is enough to be thanked by you. May I—am I impertinent in asking you—will you tell me your name?"

"I am called Laura Collingwood," she answered, freely and frankly. "What is yours?"

"Philip Durnford."

"Philip Durnford—I like the name. Mr. Venn has a friend of your name, but I have not met him yet. Good-bye, Mr. Durnford."

"One moment. Shall we never meet again?"

He looked so sentimental that Laura burst out laughing.

"You look as if you were going to cry. I think we shall very likely never meet again."

Phil grew desperate. His hot Southern blood rose at once.

"I must speak—laugh at me if you like. I have been hanging about Oxford-street in hopes of meeting you, and for no other reason. I think you are the sweetest-looking girl I ever saw, and—and—I am a fool to say it, when I have only spoken twice—I love you."

She looked at him without a blush on her face—quite coldly, quite openly, as if it were

the most natural thing in the world for a man to tell her this at the second meeting.

"Do you mean you want to marry me?"

The question, so abruptly and boldly stated, took Philip by surprise.

"Of course I do," he cried, hastily—"of course I do."

"Oh," she replied, slowly, "I don't know. You see, I've no experience in marriage matters. I must ask Mr. Venn what he thinks about it. He told me the other day that he should like to see me married. I shall see what he says about it, first. We must never do serious things in a hurry, you know."

Surely, the quaintest answer that ever man had to a proposal. Philip felt as if he were in a dream.

"Won't you come and see him yourself?" she asked.

He hesitated.

"I have been too hasty," he said. "Pardon me. I am rude and uncouth. Miss Collingwood, I ask your forgiveness."

"I wonder what for?" thought Lollie. But she said nothing.

"Let us wait," he said. "Marriage is a very serious thing, as you say. I am worse than a fool. Believe only that I love you, as I said. And meet me again. Let me learn to love you more, and try and teach you to love me."

"I will ask Mr. Venn."

"No," said Philip, with a sharp pang of conscience, "do not ask him. Wait. Meet me once more first, and let me speak to you again. Then you shall tell him. Will you promise me so much? Meet me to-morrow."

"I promise," said Laura. "But—"

"Thanks—a thousand thanks. You will meet me to-morrow, and you will keep the secret."

He took off his hat, lightly touched her fingers, and walked away.

Lollie went in to Mr. Venn. It was four in the afternoon, and the sage was hard at work on his last essay.

"I thought you would never come, child. What did Sukey say?"

"Miss Venn is better, and much obliged for the papers; and, oh, Mr. Venn, I've had an adventure, and I've got a secret!"

"What is the adventure, Lollie?"

"That is the secret. I will tell it you as soon as I can. Tell me, Mr. Venn, is it wrong to have a secret?"

"That is a wide question, involving a profound study of all casuistry and debated points, from Thales to Mill. I would rather refer you to their works, generally."

"Well, then, may I have a secret?"

"Fifty, my dear, if you will. You look a great deal better to-day, Lollie; and if this east wind would be good enough to go away—where would it go to, and what becomes of all the other winds when they are off duty?"

"Eurus keeps them in a bag, you know."

"So he does—so he does. Well, in spite of the east wind, let us go and look at the shops, Lollie."

They did; and at ten, after a little music and talk, the girl went home as usual, but feeling strangely excited.

Let us follow her newly found lover, and tell how his evening was spent.

Just now this part of the day was usually devoted to the billiard-room of the very respectable club to which he had been elected on his arrival in England. He was an indifferently good player—nowhere in good company, but could hold his own in bad. He had no scientific knowledge of the angles of the table; he handled his cue clumsily; and was not within thirty-five points in a hundred of the best players at his club. Besides, he was not really fond of the game: it was the money element that made him play at all; and he never cared to play without having from half a crown to a sovereign on his game. Philip was that very common animal, a born gambler. Now, pool always presented the attraction of chance; so Mr. Phil played much more at this than he did at billiards. He generally got put out of the game among the first. Still, there is always a large element of luck about it; and though you are knocked out, there is the chance of a bet or two on the lives left in. It was a mild enough affair—three shilling pool and shilling lives, just enough to keep the spark of gambling alive. At the pool-table, as a matter of course, Philip picked up a few friends—Captains Shairp and Smythe, late of the —th, in which regiment they had lost all their money, and perhaps a little of their honour; living now, it was whispered, largely on their wits. Gentlemen such as these play well at most games, whether of chance or skill. They have a habit of making friends with new members of the club; though it is observed

that these friendships seldom last long. And yet, Smythe and Shairp were two of the most agreeable, polite, open-hearted fellows it is possible to conceive. No men corrected the marker's mistakes so softly: no men called to the waiters for a drink in so jolly and affable a tone. Yet nobody cared for their society. Perhaps the captains were to blame for this. Who knows? On the other hand, people might be wrong in whispering away their fair fame. The fact is indisputable—they had the misfortune to be disliked.

Philip Durnford knew nothing of all this when he joined his club; and so, in two days' time, he nodded to the captains as they chalked their cues for business, chatted in a week, and was a friend in a fortnight. Perhaps, if Smythe and Shairp had known the exact amount of Mr. Philip's balance at his agent's, they might not have been so free and open-handed in the matter of cigars.

It was on the evening of this, his second meeting with Laura, that Philip dined at his club, and went quietly into the billiard-room after dinner: intending to play till nine, and then go to the French play, where he had a stall—centre of the second row. The evening proved a sort of turning-point in his career; for, unluckily, he never went to the French play at all. His two friends had also two friends with them—very young fellows, with the air of wealth about them. In a word, pigeons being plucked. Two or three other men were playing in the pool with them: among these was young Mylles, cornet in the Hussars, the most amiable and the silliest young gander in the club: a little looked down upon, because his father had been connected with the soap-boiling interest. Said Shairp, when Phil proposed to put down his cue and go—

"If you would stay, we could make up two rubbers. Pray don't go—that is, if you can stay."

It poured in torrents. Phil looked out into the wet street, hesitated, and was lost.

The card-room was cozy enough—bright and warm; though the rain pelted hard against the window, and came spitting down the chimney into the fire. Over the fire-place hung the usual rules against heavy bets and games of chance—a fact which did not restrain the astute Shairp. He said, after a rubber—

"By Jove! Whist is a very fine game, and a very noble game, and all that; but at the risk of being thought an ass, I must say it is not exciting enough to please me."

Captain Smythe concurred.

So did Phil. He hated whist with all his heart. He was a bad player.

"I really think, now, if you will excuse me, I shall go to the play. It is past ten already, and I want to see *Mdlle.* —"

"But you can't go out in this rain, you know. It's absurd to have a cab to cross the street in. Wait a bit."

Phil waited. Another rubber was played through. Smythe walked to the window, threw up his great arms over his head, and yawned loudly.

"Smythe's tired," said Shairp.

"So am I," said Phil.

"We might have a little something else for a change, eh?"

"Ah," said Smythe, "we might. Confound it, though, we can't play here, and"—pulling out his watch—"I've got a most particular appointment at eleven."

"I haven't had a hand at loo for—let me see—six months, I know, if it's a day," said Shairp.

His friend had ten objections—overruled in ten seconds.

One of the party never played at loo, and left them. The younger pigeon, who had just got into newly furnished chambers, said—

"It paws so with wain, or we might go to my diggings. What a baw it is. One's boots would be sopped through before one could get into a Hansom."

So they played at the club.

"Just ten minutes, you know," said Shairp and Smythe.

The ten minutes grew into an hour and a half. The stakes were doubled twice, and the game was "guinea unlimited," when the pigeons were so thirsty that they risked ringing the bell.

"Brandy and soda, waiter."

The drinks arrived, and with them a hint that they were breaking the rules of the club.

Phil was the heaviest loser, and with his money he lost what is of much more value at games of chance—his temper. He answered the polite message of the servant with an oath. Two minutes afterwards the steward came. Civilly he pointed to the

rules hanging over the fireplace, and asked the gentlemen to desist.

Shairp and Smythe said he was quite right, and mentally calculated what they had won by handling the money in their pockets.

But Philip acted differently. He said—

"It's an' infernal silly rule, that's all I've got to say."

"It is the rule, sir," said the nettled servant.

"Then d—n the rule, and you too." And he tore the cardboard from the nail it hung on, and tore it into a dozen pieces. Some fell in the fender, some in the fire.

"I say, Durnford," said Shairp, "I think that's rather strong."

Phil laughed. The man said he must report the act to the secretary, and left the room.

They played till there was a single. Then everybody but Philip and one of the two pigeons had had enough. They were either winners on the night, or had not lost. So the pigeon, backed by Phil, insisted that they could not leave off yet; and the party of seven adjourned in two four-wheelers to the pigeon's chambers.

Here, when the fire was lighted, and they had tried the quality of their host's liquids, the game went on. A fresh place, new cards.

"My luck will change, you'll see," said Phil. But it did not, and as all his ready money was gone, he put in 100s, written on scraps of paper and signed P. D., with an apology.

"A man can't carry the Bank of England about with him," he said.

"I suppose he is good," whispered Shairp.

"Right as the mail," replied Smythe.

So they went on, and the two friends took Phil's paper as readily as their young pigeon's notes.

The game waxed warm. The stakes got high. Their host emptied two gold-topped scent bottles filled with sovereigns out of his dressing case on to the claret cloth of his card table, and they were gone in three rounds. The bottles held fifty a-piece too.

"My usual luck," growled Philip. "Looed again."

"I never saw anything like it," said Smythe. "It must turn, though, and we need not hurry."

"Oh, no—play for ever if you like, he-ah," said their host. He was getting rather tipsy.

But Shairp and Smythe, who had earned

their money, got fidgety, and began to feel very sleepy.

Shairp nodded in his chair. Smythe looked at his watch every few minutes, although there were three French clocks in the rooms, chiming the quarters, and his own watch had stopped at half-past three.

Phil's luck had not turned, and he was very much excited. His head ached; his eyes ached; the brandy he had drunk had made his legs feel queer; and his temper was what a gentleman's is when luck has been against him all night.

There were frequent squabbles as to the amount of the pool, the division of it into tricks, as to who was looted and who was not; but oftenest about who had not put his money in.

Little silly, honest Mylles was now the soberest of the party—always excepting the two confederates—and he was only kept out of his bed in his father's house in Eaton-square by the feeling that he ought not to be the first to run away, as he had not lost much.

Phil was inaccurate, and Mylles corrected him more than once. The others supported Mylles's view, and this riled Phil. At last, when Phil exclaimed—

"Somebody has not put in again," he looked pointedly across the table.

"I put in," said Shairp, wide awake. "I know mine. It was two half sovs and a shilling."

"I saw you," said Smythe, quite careless whether the assertion possessed the merit of truth or not.

" — parcit
Cognatis maculis similis fera."

"I know I put in," said Shairp and everybody.

"Then it's put on to me again," said Phil, snappishly.

"You did not put in, I know," said Mylles, quietly. "I saw who put in."

"That be d——d," said Philip, his features swelling and his lips twitching.

The cornet turned a little pale.

"If you mean those words, I must leave the room."

"Consider them repeated," said Philip, in a fury.

"I must go," said Mylles, rising.

"Go, then; and be d——d to you."

To two persons present it did not matter. Their end was served—for the night. The three gentlemen who heard it were shocked,

and ran after Mylles. But he could not be prevailed on to come back.

When they returned without him, Phil was laughing immoderately, with laughter half real, half affected.

"I'll tell you what I'm laughing at," he said. "I was thinking what a scene Thackeray would have made out of all this."

"Thackeray, at least, would never have behaved so to anybody," said the soberest of the men.

Phil laughed, feeling a good deal ashamed, and the party separated. Phil, with a note of the amount of the I O Us—a good deal heavier than he at all expected—and a promise to send cheques the next morning, went home to bed.

It was broad daylight, and therefore tolerably late.

As he felt for his latch-key, he found the ticket for the stall in his pocket.

"Wish I'd gone there," he sighed.

Morning brought repentance. He sent his cheques; he sent in his resignation to the club; he sought out Mylles and apologized; and then—most fatal act—he met Smythe, and accepted a proposal of that gallant officer's to put his name down at the Burleigh Club.

CHAPTER VIII.

IF you want to see Marguerite waiting for Faust, as likely a spot as any to find her is the left-hand walk, below the bridge, in St. James's Park—that part of the walk which is opposite to the Foreign Office, and has an umbrageous protection of leaves and branches. I am told that the British Museum is another likely place. Certainly, it has never yet been satisfactorily explained why so many pretty girls go there. South Kensington is greatly frequented by young ladies who delight in those innocent dallings with a serious passion which we call a flirtation. According to some authorities, the Crystal Palace is the most likely place of all. But my own experience leads me to select St. James's Park. There, between the hours of ten and one, or between three and five—because Marguerite dines with her family at one—you may always see some pretty rosy-checked damsel strolling, apparently with no purpose except that of gentle exercise, up and down the shady walks. Sometimes she stops at the water's edge, and contemplates the ducks which adorn the lake, or impatiently pushes the gravel into the water

with the point of her parasol. Sometimes she makes great play with a book. But always she is there first; for very fear, poor child, that she may miss him. And he always comes late.

On this particular morning—a fresh, bright morning in May—the east winds having gone away earlier than usual, and the leaves really beginning to feel tolerably safe in coming out, a young girl of eighteen is loitering up and down, with an anxious and rather careworn look. Big Ben chimes the quarters, and people come and go. But she remains, twisting her glove, and biting her lips with vexation. The appointed time was half-past ten. She was there at a quarter before ten. It is now eleven.

"And he said he would be there punctually," she murmurs.

Presently, she leaves off tapping the ground impatiently. Her cheek flushes. Her eyes begin to soften. She hesitates. She turns into the shadiest part of the walk, while a manly heel comes crunching the gravel behind her. There is no one in the walk but a policeman. He—good, easy man—as one used to the ways of young people, and as experienced as the moon herself, turns away, and slowly leaves them alone.

"Laura," whispers the new-comer, taking both her hands.

She makes pretence of being angry.

"Philip! And you promised to be here at half-past ten."

"I could not help it, child. Regimental duties detained me."

"But your regiment is at Malta."

"That is it. Correspondence. Letters which had to be answered."

Lovlace himself never told a greater fib.

And presently they sit down and talk.

"See what I have brought for you, Laura," says the lover, lugging out a pair of earrings, in the child's eyes worthy to be worn by a duchess. "Will you wear them, and will you think of me every time you put them on?"

Laura takes the earrings, and looks up at him in a grave and serious way. She has none of the little coquettish ways of girls who want to play and sport with their lovers, like an angler with his fish. That was because she had never associated with girls of her own age at all. Straightforward, and perfectly truthful, she answered him now with another question.

"Will you tell me again what you told

me when we met last—the second time we ever met?"

"I told you that I loved you, and I asked you to marry me. Tell me only in return that you love me a very little. If you give me back a tenth part of my love for you, Laura, I should be rich indeed in love."

"I don't know," she answered, looking him full in the face. "I like you. You are a gentleman, and—and handsome, and you are pleasant. Then you fall in love with me, which, I am sure, must be a silly thing to do. That's against you, you know. But how am I to know that I love you?"

"Do you want to see me?"

"Yes," she answered, frankly; "else I should not be here now."

"Do you love anybody else?"

"Oh, no."

"Do you think of me?"

"Why, of course. I've been thinking of nothing else. It is all so strange. I've been dreaming about you, even," she added, laughing.

"And you have said nothing to Mr. — what is his name, your guardian?"

"Mr. Venn? No—nothing. I only told him I had a secret, and wanted to keep it for the present."

"Good child."

"Then, I told him yesterday that I was coming here—all part of my secret—at half-past ten."

"You told him you were coming here?" said Philip, starting up. "Then he is quite sure to come too."

"Mr. Venn is a gentleman, Mr. Durnford," said Laura, with great dignity. "He trusts people altogether, or not at all."

"By Jove!" murmured Phil, "he must be a very remarkable man."

"Mr. Venn told me to keep my secret as long as ever I pleased. So that is all right. And now I must tell you two or three things about myself, and we will talk about love and all that afterwards, if you like."

"No; let us talk about love now. Never mind the two or three things."

"But we must, you know. Now, listen. Who do you think I am? Tell me honestly, because I want to know. Quite honestly, mind. Don't think you will offend me."

"Well—honestly, I do not know and cannot guess. You dress like all young ladies, but you are somehow different."

"Ah," replied Laura, "I never shall be like them."

"But, child, you are a great deal better. You don't pretend to blush, and put on all sorts of little affectations; and you haven't learned all their tricks."

"What affectations—what tricks?"

"And I like you all the better for it. Now, tell me who you are, and all about yourself."

"My mother was a poor girl. My father was a gentleman—I am glad to know that. He died before I was born. My grandmother is a poor old woman, who gets her living by being a laundress, in Gray's Inn. And if it had not been for Mr. Venn, I should have been—I don't know—anything. He took me when I was five years old, and has been educating me ever since. I never spoke to any lady in my life, except Miss Venn, his sister. I never go anywhere, except with Mr. Venn; and I never spoke to any gentleman, except Mr. Venn's most intimate friends, until I met you. I have no relations, no friends, no connections. I belong to the very lowest stratum of London life. Now, Mr. Durnford, you have all my story. What do you think of it?"

His face wore a puzzled expression.

"Tell me more. Have you no brothers?"

"No, none."

"That's a good thing. I mean, of course, it is always best to be without brothers and cousins. Don't you think so?"

"I don't know. It must be nice to have one brother all to yourself, you know. There's a large family of brothers, grown-up brothers, living next door to my grandmother's. They get drunk every Saturday evening, and fight. I should not like brothers like them. To be sure, they are stone-masons."

"And now tell me more about your guardian, Mr. Venn. I suppose he is a fidgety old gentleman—likes to have you about him to nurse him, and all that?"

Lollie burst out laughing.

"Mr. Venn is not an old gentleman at all. Older than you, of course, ever so much. He must be thirty-seven, at least."

"Oh!" Philip's face lengthened. "And does Mr. Venn never—never make love to you on his own account?"

She laughed the louder.

"Oh, what nonsense!" she cried—"Mr. Venn making love to me. He has told me twice that he wants me to marry a gentle-

man. That was why I agreed to meet you again."

"So there was no love for me at all," said Philip.

"I wish you wouldn't talk like that," replied the girl. "I've told you already. What more can I say? You asked me if I loved anybody else. Of course I do not. Then you asked me if I liked you. Of course I do. And if I have been thinking about you. Of course I have. Now, sir, what more do you want?"

"Laura, if you loved me, you would long to see me again; your pulse would beat, and your face would flush, when you met me. But you are cold and passionless. You know"—his own face flushing—"that I think of no one but you. You know that—that there is nothing in the world I would not give to win you. And yet you play with me as if I were a statue of marble."

She looked at him in a kind of surprise.

"I don't understand you at all. What am I to say? You tell me you love me. That makes me very proud, because it is a great thing to be loved by a gentleman. I am grateful. What more do you want? My pulse doesn't beat any faster when I see you coming along the walk—not a bit. If it did I would tell you. Tell me what it is you want me to do, and I will do it. But of course you would not like me to tell you anything but the truth."

She looked at him with her full, earnest eyes. His fell before them. They were so reproachful in their innocence and purity.

"I want nothing, Laura," he said, in a husky voice—"nothing. Only I love you, child, and you must be mine."

"Oh!" she replied, clapping her hands. "Then I will tell Mr. Venn at once. He will be glad. And you shall come up with me to see him."

"I am afraid that will hardly do," said her lover, feebly. "No. Listen, Laura, dear. Mr. Venn knows you have a secret, and has given you permission to keep it, hasn't he?"

"Yes."

"Then we will keep it. We will keep it till the day we are married, and then we will go together to his chambers, you and I, and you shall say—"

"Mr. Venn, I have done what you wanted me to do. I have married a man who loves me—who is a gentleman; and I have done

it, first because you will be pleased, and secondly because I love him too."

She pondered a little.

"I wonder if that is right. Don't you think I ought to tell him at once?"

"Oh, no—certainly not yet. Not till we are actually married. Think how gratified Mr. Venn will be."

She was not yet satisfied.

"I will think it over," she said. "Mr. Venn always says that going to bed is the best thing for bringing your opinion right. Whenever he is troubled with anything, he goes to bed early, and in the morning he is always as happy as ever. I am quite sure he would be very glad to be told all about it at once. Some day, how proud and happy we shall all be to have known him."

"Very likely; and meanwhile, Laura, nothing will be said to him."

"No—I will go on keeping the secret. But, Philip, it will be so delightful when we can all three go together up the river. Do you know the Bells of Ouseley? We often go there in the summer, row down the river, you know, have dinner, and row back again in the evening for the last train. There is nothing in the world so delightful."

"But if we are married, you may not be able to be so much with Mr. Venn."

Her face fell.

"Tell me," she said. "Marriage does not mean that I am to be separated from Mr. Venn, does it? Because if it does, I would never marry any one. No, not if he loved me—as much as you say you do."

"Marriage, my little innocent pet," said Philip, laughing, "means sometimes that two people are so fond of each other that they never want anybody else's society at all. But with you and me, it will mean that we shall be so proud of each other, so pleased with each other's society, that we shall be glad to get Mr. Venn, whom you are so fond of, to share it with us. He shall be with us all day if you like, as many hours in the day as you spend with him now. But all the rest of the day you will spend with me, and my life will be given up to make you happy."

She looked at him again with wondering eyes, softened in expression.

"That sounds very pleasant and sweet. I think you must be a good man. Are you so good as Mr. Venn?"

"I don't know how good Mr. Venn is."

"I could tell you lots of things about Mr.

Venn's goodness. There was poor Mary. That is four years ago now, and I was a very little girl. I don't know what she did; but her father turned her away from his doors, and she was starving. I told Mr. Venn, and he helped her to get a place in a theatre, where she works now. Poor Mary! I met her the other day; and when she asked after Mr. Venn, she burst out crying. Then once, when old Mrs. Weeks's son Joe fell off the ladder—it was a terrible thing for them, you know, because he broke his leg, and was laid up for weeks, and nothing for his mother while he was in hospital—Mr. Venn heard of it, and kept the old woman till Joe came out of hospital again. I saw him, one Sunday, carrying a leg of mutton himself, wrapped up in the *Observer*, to Mrs. Weeks's lodging. And I think Joe would cut off his head to do good to Mr. Venn."

Big Ben struck twelve.

"There's twelve o'clock. And he will be waiting for me. Good-bye, Philip. I must make haste back."

"Keep our secret, Laura."

"Yes; he said I might. Good-bye."

"Meet me here, next Monday. To-day is Friday. I will be here at ten. Will you?"

She took his hand in her frank and honest way, and tripped away. Presently, she came running back.

"Please, Mr. Durnford," she said, "give me some money for a cab. I cannot bear that he should wait for me."

"He." Always Mr. Venn first in her thoughts.

She took a florin from the silver Philip held out to her, and ran out of the park.

He lit a cigar, and strolling round the ornamental water, began to think.

What did he mean to do about the girl?

At this point he hardly knew himself, except that he was madly in love with her. It was but the third time they had met. He loved her. The passion in his heart was born a full flower, almost at first sight. He seemed, now, no longer master of himself, so great and overwhelming was his desire to get this girl for himself. But how? He knew well enough that there was little enough left of the original five thousand. How could he marry on a subaltern's pay? How could he take this young lady, with her very remarkable education and history, her quaint and unconventional ideas, and her ignorance of the world, into his regi-

ment? And lastly, how about Mr. Venn? There was another thing. When she accepted him—which she did, as we know, after a fashion quite unknown to fiction and little practised in real life—when she listened to his tale of love, it was all in reference to Mr. Venn. The very frankness with which the innocent girl had received his suit was galling to a man's pride, especially if it happen to be a man with a strong sense of personal superiority. Had he been a hunchback, had his legs been bowed and his back double, had he been an idiot and a crétin, she could not well have been colder or less encouraging. She did not love him, that was clear; but was he sure that all this innocence was real? Could a London girl be so brought up as to have no sense of the realities of life? Would it be possible that a girl would accept a man, promise to marry him, on the very first offer, solely because her guardian wanted her to marry a gentleman?

Some men's passions are like a furnace, not only because they are so hot and burning, but also because they are only fanned by cold air. Had Laura met her lover's fond vows by any corresponding affection, he would have tired of her in a week. But she did not, as we have seen. Met him with a cold look of astonishment. "Love you? Oh, dear, no. I cannot even tell what you mean by love. Yes, I love Mr. Venn." Amaryllis, pursued by Corydon, laughs in his face, and tells him that she will marry him because she loves Alexis, and Alexis wants her to marry somebody. And yet poor Corydon loves her still.

Corydon, meditating these things, and trying—to do him justice—to repel and silence certain wicked voices of suspicion and evil prompting which were buzzing in his ears, slowly walked round the ornamental water, and emerged into Pall-mall. On either shoulder was seated a little devil, one of the kind chiefly employed for West-end work—young, but highly promising and well-informed.

"You love her," said one. "She is young and innocent, unsuspecting and credulous."

"She does not love you," said the other; "she only wants to please the man she really loves."

And so on, amusing themselves as such little imps are wont, while he sauntered along the "sweet shady side," a prey to all kinds of imaginings and doubts. Per-

haps, after all, the imaginings came from the depths of his own brain, and not from any little imps at all; and certainly, the existence of these animals does present enormous difficulties to the speculative philosopher, and, since the times of the Rev. Mr. Barham, they have not been prominently before the public. If they have any functions to perform in this generation, I should think they are used chiefly to influence men like our poor Philip—whose strength of will has been corrupted by evil habit, by vanity, by false shame—to draw a veil over what is good, to represent the bad as fatal, inevitable, and not really so bad as has been made out.

Now, as he turned the corner of Waterloo-place, a thing befell him which must really have been the special work of the Chief of the Metropolitan Secret Iniquity Force. I may seem harsh in my judgment, but the event will perhaps justify me.

There came beating across the street, from the corner of Cockspur-street to the far corner of Waterloo-place, with intent to go down Pall-mall, a team of animated sandwiches. With that keen sense of the fitness of things which always distinguishes the profession, they had selected this as the fittest place to advertise a spectacle at the Victoria Theatre. The ways of this curious and little-studied folk afford, sometimes, food for profound reflection. I have seen the bearer of a sandwich, on one side of which was inscribed the legend, "Silence, tremble!" and on the other words more sacred than may here be lightly written, heavily drunk outside a public, while a friend engaged in making known the Coal Hole and the Poses Plastiques was expostulating with him on his immorality. The perfunctory preacher had not taken his own text to heart. The principle is exactly the same as that by which the Cambridge undergraduate from far Cathay, who confesses that there is but one God and Mohammed is his prophet, passes that barrier to distinction called the Little Go, wherein he has to master Paley's "Evidences of Christianity," and goes back to his native island and to Islam.

This particular procession consisted of twelve men. On the proud shield which each bore in front and behind was blazoned a scene of almost impossible splendour and magnificence, while a single letter on each enabled the whole to be read by the curious, as the pageant streamed past, as "Oberon's

Haunt." "Streaming past" is poetical, but scarcely correct. It rather shuffled past. Most of the knights, or esquires—*scutiferi*—were men well stricken in years, their faces lined with thought, or it may have been experience. After some five or six had passed along, one experienced a feeling as of red noses. Their dress was shabby and dirty; their looks were hopeless and blank; some of them seemed to have once been gentlemen; and the spectator, looking at the men who carried rather than the thing they bore, was touched with a sense of pity and fear.

Poor Helots of our great London. You are paraded, I suspect, by the philanthropists—perhaps it is the great secret unsuspected work of the Society for the Suppression of Vice—who make you carry a shield to hide their intentions and spare you unnecessary shame. They spend their money upon you—not too much, it is true—that we may have before our eyes a constant example of the effects of drink. March! Bands of Hope, with colours flying and music playing; sing "Sursum, corda," and strengthen resolution by speeches and hymns. But on your way home, look at this poor creature of sixty, who was once delicately nurtured and carefully brought up—a scholar and a gentleman—and tremble lest you give way. For the sandwich men mean drink, drink, drink. Better to have these woebegone faces before us as we walk down the street than the Lacedæmonian Helot staggering foolishly before us.

Phil stood and watched them dodging the cabs. One by one they got across that difficult and dangerous corner where there ought to be an island every three yards to protect us. Presently, the bearer of the letter H arrived on the kerb and fell into line. Philip dropped his cigar and started. The man was looking straight before him. His face was perfectly white and pale, and without hair. His locks were of a silvery white, although he could hardly have been much more than fifty. His nose—a fat, prominent organ—was deeply tinged with red; his mouth was tremulous; crows'-feet lay under his eyes, which were small, bright, and cunning, set beneath light brown or reddish eyebrows. The aspect of the man, with his white hair, smooth face, red nose, and bushy eyebrows, was so remarkable that many people turned to look at him as they passed.

Philip walked with the procession, keeping behind him.

A tall hat, well battered by the storms of life, a thick pea jacket, and a thin pair of Tweed trousers seemed to make all his dress.

Presently, Philip touched him on the shoulder.

The man turned upon him with a glare of terror which to a policeman would have spoken volumes.

Philip looked at him still, but said nothing. He shuffled along with the rest, trembling in every limb. Then Philip touched him on the shoulder again, and said, in a low voice—

"Obsairve, Mr. Alexander MacIntyre."

The ex-tutor looked at him in a stupid way.

"I know you, man," said Philip. "Come out of this, and talk."

They were at the corner of Jermyn-street. To the surprise of his fellows, Letter H suddenly left the line, and dived down Jermyn-street. They waited a little. He was joined by a gentleman; and after a few moments, he slipped his head through the boards, and leaving them on the pavement, hurried away.

This was what passed.

"You will remember me presently," said Philip. "I am Philip Durnford. There is my card. Get food, clothes, not too much drink, and come to my lodgings at eight o'clock this evening. Here is a sovereign for you."

Mr. MacIntyre spoke not a word, but took the coin and watched his patron go striding away. Then he bit the sovereign to see if it was good—a dreadful proof of his late misfortunes. Then he laughed in a queer way, and got out of his boards. After that, of course, he went round the corner. Gentlemen down in the world always do. There was a public-house round the corner. He felt in his pocket, where jingled threepence, his little all, and dived into the hostelry. A moment after, he came out, his eyes bright, his mouth firm, his head erect, and walked briskly away.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF CALLAO.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ATTEMPTS UPON MY LIFE."

IT was all about some guano and saltpetre. That was what the war between Spain and Peru began about. It was immediately after the destruction of Valparaiso by the

Spanish fleet that tidings reached Peru that Callao was in danger. The Peruvians, proud and boastful, had hitherto laughed at and defied the Spaniards, whose yoke they had shaken off; and, confident in the distance that separated Peru from Spain, they had organized no militia, and made no preparation for defence.

The merchants of Callao, alarmed at the destruction of Valparaiso, at once gave themselves up for lost. They saw already, in imagination, Spanish shells bursting amidst their bales and casks, and their rich merchandize blazing into one fiery ruin. Wealth makes men timid and selfish. The merchants were everywhere to be seen, rushing here and there, beating their hands together, with loud lamentations at the coming destruction. Some were hurrying to buy up carriers, and carts, and porters to remove their goods to Lima, out of the reach of the Spanish cannon; and others were at the railway stations, negotiating contracts with the railway. The rates were raised to an exorbitant amount, and Mr. Younghusband, the manager of the Lima and Callao Railway, sat in his office, worn out and pale from want of sleep, his eyes shut, his hand extended for money; and no promise was made at what hour or in what way persons' goods would be sent to Lima. Trains were running day and night. It being only a single line, the unfortunate drivers and stokers had neither time to eat, sleep, or wash. One English driver whom I knew—very pale in the face when he was not very grimy—stopped me one day as I entered the station.

"Do you know me?" he said. "I guess this is all that is left of me. I've had no sleep for three nights, and if this goes on longer my days will soon be ended. My fat is all gone, my brains are going, and I've no time to wash, except in this scalding water. For my part, I wish the Spaniards would come and knock the whole lot of them into fits. It would save my life."

The road from Callao to Lima was equally crowded. There you saw the harmless lama, with an old woman on its back, clinging to a basket which contained all she possessed, and with a cock and hen, or a cat, fastened outside it. At all hours you met country carts, with low wooden wheels, sunk to the axle-trees in the sand and mud. These carts were piled mountains high with pots and pans, and household goods.

Every house and room in Lima was already crowded; so that no one knew what would become of all these poor frightened people, even when they got to their destination. It was no uncommon thing at a turn of the road to come upon half a dozen broken-down carts, the wheels, which had no metal binding, having burst, or the horse having fallen with a broken leg—so bad was the road, so great the weight of the loads. There they lay, like the debris of the retreat from Moscow, the drivers cursing themselves and the horses, shouting "Viva Prado!" "Inneste" some one else, and every second word a malediction on the accursed Spaniards, the cause of all these evils.

While watching this scene, I entered one day into conversation with a simple-minded chulo, the son of a Spaniard who had made a large fortune by robbing on the road between Lima and the silver mines. He had buried his money the very day he was killed. The chulo had entered the army in the hope that that mode of life would give him opportunities of discovering the buried treasure. It was often the custom, he told me, to hide the bars of silver in cheeses, so as to elude the notice of the thieves. This man, an honest, frank fellow as could be, though the son of a thief, had been to the Chinchas Islands, where the guano is; and he assured me that, by a recent Government survey, it was ascertained that all the guano there would be consumed in fifteen years. Now, considering that these islands are the only security the English have for their money lent to Peru, this promises much misery for the future. The chulo was anxious to know where I was from, as every foreigner then was suspected of being a spy. I disowned all political bias, but professed a zeal for liberty, and an admiration for those who would fight for it, and not merely for plunder. I exhorted him to retain the liberty he had, and not to desert the constitution; and I got quite eloquent in my denunciations of Spain. The chulo talked sensibly enough of the corruption of the Government employés, and the baseness of the insurrectionary leaders, who fought for selfish purposes, and were too lazy to develop the natural resources of the country. The guano islands, he said, were the curse of Peru, which would never really develop till those islands were swept clean—became

useless and unproductive. The misfortune of Peru was that the Government officials thought only of plunder, and not of work. This was the curse of his race, the curse of his generation. The presidents tried their hardest to make what they could in their terms of office, and to invest it safe, ready for their flight. No man being secure in his post, every man thought of plunder, or of the means of getting into power again. I described to the chulo our own constitutional Government and the virtuous Queen it had.

"Ah, here," he said, "our leaders commit murders to get the supreme power in their own hands. The short tenure of office is the great curse of our Government."

And this was a poor mountaineer, a mere chulo, a common soldier carrying a musket in the Peruvian army. I derived from his conversation a favourable impression of the intelligence of the Peruvian peasant.

Callao, which had seen no fighting since Lord Cochrane's time, is built on a flat, sandy shore, six miles from Lima, the capital of the republic. The town spreads in a crescent shape, the consequence of which was that the Spanish vessels that came into action were within point-blank range of all the guns defending the town. The Spaniards, not knowing that vessels of the largest tonnage could come within two hundred yards of the batteries, were afraid to approach within twelve hundred yards. This was their ruin. If they had known the soundings, with one gunboat they could have come in and dismounted every gun on the fortifications.

On the 14th of April, 1866, the revengeful Spaniards, having set fire to Valparaiso, raised the blockade of that port, and set sail for Callao. On the 26th of April the Spanish fleet, under the command of Admiral Nunez, made its appearance out at sea opposite Callao, dropped anchor about ten miles from the mainland and one mile from the shore of the island of St. Lorenzo, barring all the passages that led into the harbour. On the 27th the admiral declared the port of Callao blockaded, and warned all whom it might concern to look to themselves and their property; but owing to the generous exertions of the American and French ministers, the admiral, confident of success, allowed six days for the inhabitants and foreign merchants of Callao to transport their furniture and merchandize out of the reach of the Spanish guns. All that our worthy English representative did was to calmly inform our

British subjects that they must shift for themselves as they could. While other men were doing their duty, the English consul was a guest on board the corvette *Shearwater*, abandoning his poor countrymen, who, deprived of their daily labour, would have starved had it not been for the generous charity of the Reverend Mr. Murphy, the missionary, who, as far as his funds would go, relieved every case of real distress without distinction as to colour or creed.

On the morning of the 1st of May all the foreign shipping in the port of Callao, with the exception of vessels belonging to nations at war with Spain, dropped to leeward till the nearest of them was four miles from any shore battery. Those vessels sailing under the Peruvian and other South American flags moved towards the Custom House and inner harbour, where they were under protection of the guns of Callao. In spite of the European volunteers, the hardy Peruvians, brave as they were, were not thoroughly prepared to welcome the fleet much more than two hours before the battle began. About nine o'clock on the morning of the 2nd of May, the Spaniards were observed by our look-out to be on the move, but their vessels were so far from the shore that it was some time before we could make out clearly what they were doing. About ten o'clock we began to clearly see that they were bearing down fast upon the town.

A few minutes before twelve o'clock the Spanish iron-clad, *Numancia*, bearing the broad pennant of Admiral Nunez, steamed rapidly ahead, straight for the town, followed in line by the *Blanca* and *Resolucion*; and a counter line, to attack the town from the north side, was led by Captain Topete, in the *Villa de Madrid*, followed by the *Berenguela* and *Almanza*. A gunboat steamed between the two lines to act as a despatch boat.

At 12.25 the *Numancia* commenced the attack by firing one single random shot at the battery of Santa Rosa, and we at once responded with a murderous volley.

About twenty minutes after the first shot was fired by the Spaniards, the *Villa de Madrid* was found to be in a sinking state, and was escorted towards the anchorage by her Britannic Majesty's corvette *Shearwater* and two of the Spanish gunboats. She had been disabled by a three-hundred-pounder Armstrong shot, which had passed right through the hull from near the helm, passing

through the engine-room, and destroying both the machinery and all those on duty below. For the previous fifteen minutes neither the Spaniards nor Peruvians had done much to injure each other, till they had partially proved the range of their respective guns. Most of the Spanish gunners fired at random, whilst the Peruvians fired by a system of concentration of batteries, which is the most destructive way to use artillery, whether against ships, forts, or small or large bodies of men. A body which is struck by eight heavy shots at the same moment will suffer more than if struck by twenty-four single shots one after the other. In Napoleon's great victories he used the concentration of his artillery in almost every engagement. Before the battle began, his first object was to discover if the commander or his staff were within the range of his guns. If they were, he brought his guns to bear upon them, especially if they were congregated near each other. The Peruvians deserved great praise for their bravery and obedience; but if the Spaniards had continued the engagement for four hours longer, or returned to the attack on the following day, Callao would have been at their mercy.

About three-quarters of an hour after the first shot was fired, a terrible accident happened which dismounted two of the most valuable guns on shore. Owing to carelessness or ignorance, one of the gunners, whose duty it was to bring ammunition from the magazine close by to the Armstrong circular turret batteries, dropped one of the percussion shells on the hard stones, and it exploded, igniting some of the charges and the fuzes of the other shells within the turret. Every soldier around the batteries was destroyed, among whom were Signore Galvez, the Minister of War, and Signore Bordan, the chief military engineer. Soon after the accident at the Armstrong turret, a shot from one of the gunboats dismounted and disabled the large Blakeley gun mounted between the railway station and the American ice-house. The gun was known by the name of the American battery, because it was mounted and worked by American gentlemen of great experience. The other large Blakeley guns, mounted between the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's office and the American ice-house, were quite useless after three o'clock, owing to the springs of the compressors being broken; and the other Blakeley guns

mounted at the back of the French hospital became silent through the same defect. We began to be anxious, for the heavy guns being disabled, the other light gun batteries, except that of Santa Rosa, were useless when opposite to an ironclad navy. The battery of Santa Rosa, composed of sixty-four pounders, being fourteen feet above the level of the sea, and well protected from the stones on the sea-shore, the guns were always ready for action. The fearful effects of the concentration of the guns of this small battery were proved on the 2nd of May, 1866.

Till the last moment, the Peruvians had made little preparation for the defence. They had some Blakeley and Armstrong guns, but they were only partly mounted. The Callao people were discouraged at their defenceless state, and would have remained doing nothing, in a kind of torpor, but for the brave American, and more especially the English merchants. These men came manfully forward to defend the land of their adoption, and joined heart and hand to protect the young republic. They roused the degenerate descendants of the Spanish race to go forth like men to defend their liberties. The ladies sewed sand-bags for the forts. Some of the foreigners fought, but the greater part employed themselves in tending the sick and wounded in the thick of the fighting. Singularly enough, in spite of all the shot and shell flying about, no one engaged in these works of mercy was injured during the whole bombardment. Amongst these foreigners, the Reverend Mr. Murphy, of the London Mission, was indefatigable in his exertions. The English consul, in the midst of this self-devotion, presented a humiliating contrast. He instantly fled on board the *Shearwater*, and left British subjects to shift for themselves. The English flag was disgraced by that act. But so it is in the English consular service perpetually; the consular employes, being generally foreigners, are only intent on what they can scrape together, and have no other interest in our honour.

Two days only before the Spaniards appeared did the batteries approach completion. Land guns were scarce, and we had to take cannon from the old steamers in the harbours. The most experienced of us, who had been an artillery officer, arranged where each battery should be, and the number of guns to be mounted. The shore was strewn

with pebbles, varying in size from one pound to twenty; yet no one thought of the loss of life among our gunners that this single circumstance would occasion, till we suggested blinding the front of the batteries with sand, a proposition imperfectly carried out, except in front of the Santa Rosa battery, where I fought. It was suggested to President Prado the necessity of arming the batteries *en barbette*—that is, mounting the guns along a ridge, and not in embrasures. The President, and a few of the more intelligent of his advisers, approved of the plan, but the system was only partially used; and the result was, that while the gunners at the Santa Rosa battery for the most part escaped, the Peruvian gunners at the other batteries were shot down like dogs, and many perished from the splinters of the pebbles on the beach. The ship guns were mounted on platforms, as in a ship. But there was a great want of engineers, and the native gunners were lazy and ignorant. With the exception of one gentleman, sent out by the Blakeley Company to superintend the mounting and working of their own guns, the whole Peruvian staff were as ignorant as children of gunnery; and I do not think one of them had ever in his life seen a cannon fired in anger. The large Blakeley and Armstrong guns being mounted and in perfect preparation, with their open mouths turned seaward, the previously discouraged population of Lima and Callao began to feel new courage, and to grow now as over-confident and boastful as they had latterly been too despondent. They came down in thousands to stare at and greet the guns, and shaking their fists at the horizon over which the Spanish fleet was beginning to lift, they cried out, "What guns!" "What shot!" "God be praised!" "Those cursed Spaniards will catch it now!" The native gunners, who had never fired off a shot in anger before, grew so excited when they were instructed how to point and fire, that some of them jumped up on the guns and began to brandish their knives and defy the Spaniards.

No vessel of war in the world would be able to bear the concentration of eighty heavy guns, fired simultaneously by electricity at point-blank range.

The admiral's vessel, the *Villa de Madrid*, that came gaily into battle, her band playing, her yards squared, and her head turned viciously to the shore, soon sang another tune when the battery of Santa Rosa, open-

ing on her, swept away all her boats, and killed and wounded many of her men. This was the first indication the Spaniards had had that the town was at all fortified, and they had supposed that they were going to make as quick work with us as they had done at Valparaiso. The admiral very soon had enough of this; and giving orders to tack, retired, and signalled for a second vessel to take his place. The second vessel, finding the oven hotter than even the admiral had done, soon made room for a third. The Santa Rosa battery, the highest of all the Callao batteries, being about six feet higher than the decks of the Spanish vessels, was the most formidable enemy they had to encounter, and was the one they were the least able to injure. The Spaniards, instead of trying percussion shells at this battery, used time shells, which, intended for a mile and fired at only half a mile, generally burst several hundred yards behind our gunners. As I stood taking notes in the Santa Rosa battery, some Italians employed in the battery began to quarrel about a beefsteak, one of them having greedily eaten not only his own portion, but that of two of his companions. The angry men were ripe for murder when I approached them.

"For shame," I cried. "It is these accursed Spaniards you should fight. Go to your posts."

One of the rascals drew his knife at me. I fired a bullet through his hat, and warned him that the next would be through his body. Then I changed hats with him, called them all noble Italians, and sent them to work with cries of "Death to the Spaniards."

The chulos fought very well. They were led to understand, nevertheless, that any one of them leaving his gun without leave of the commander would instantly be shot. An amazon from Lima acted as an aide-de-camp, and walked up and down the battery, a bottle of Pisco in one hand and a revolver in the other, vowing to shoot the first man who deserted the guns. She was there during the whole engagement, in the thick of the shot and shell, and, although an enormously tall woman, was never wounded. Her cousin, Caterina, too, was close by on horseback, with bags of lint and bandages slung around her. From the moment she took her position, that brave woman never deserted her post.

We were just loading on the recoil, and

were all at the ropes, when half a pebble came and carried off the head of my poor Number Four. The man's neck struck against my arm, and the body for a moment clutched the rope, and then fell stiff, in the attitude of pulling. I instantly threw my cloak over the body, that the sight might not discourage the men. After the fourteen Spanish vessels began to falter and hang back, the gunboats came in; and they fared even worse. One retired all but sinking. The Blakeley guns proved perfect; but the carriages were like toys, and so weak that parts of them gave way after three rounds. The Armstrong guns were of great service, some of the shots piercing the whole length of the vessels, and sweeping down the firemen. At the close of the day the Spaniards, in a sort of desperation, fired pieces of iron bars, which, however, did us but little harm.

After four and a half hours' firing, the Spaniards withdrew, much mauled, and with the admiral and the second in command disabled.

The moment the Spaniards turned tail, on the 2nd of May, thousands flocked to the batteries.

The officers, gunners, and volunteers were complimented, thanked, and embraced for their bravery and success. Every one who wished could both eat and drink; in fact, the people were mad at their victory and salvation. Port, sherry, and champagne were handed round like water, not in glasses, but in bottles. I found myself surrounded by hundreds of men and women, who would insist on pouring champagne in token of the national gratitude; and I believe, if I had let them, they would have made me swim in a bath of that pleasant and costly beverage. For a week after, Lima and Callao were illuminated, and public feasts held in honour of their first independence. Political prisoners were released from their cells and rewarded with presents, and several murderers in the chain-gang had their fetters knocked off. The people and the press having publicly thanked me for my services, and as the discontented, the hungry, and lazy were preparing for another revolution, I bade good-bye to Peru, and shipped on board the American man-of-war *Lancaster* as a passenger, bound for Norfolk, Virginia.

The majority of the white population of Peru is composed of Americans, English, Italians, and Germans. Three-fourths of the English, especially those in the interior,

are deserters from English ships, and run-away convicts from the British colonies.

Among those who took an active part in the battle of Callao were two of the crew of the *Bella*, which ship has been so often mentioned during the Tichborne trial.

Like almost all sailors, they went by nicknames. One was called Yorkey, and the other Yankey Joe. I heard that Joe was blown up at the Armstrong battery, on the 2nd of May; but Yorkey shipped for the voyage, and came home with me on board the *Lancaster*, and took his discharge from that vessel in the port of Norfolk, Virginia, on the 18th of March, 1867. In what name he was enrolled on the ship's books I do not know. I first met him and his companion at the port of Equador, in March, 1866. They were wandering about Peru and the other republics for over a period of nine years. They spoke Spanish well, and lived from hand to mouth, generally working as labourers and handy men. When I met them they were travelling on foot from the gold mines of Barbecos, in the republic of Columbia, close to Panama. They related to me their adventures, their shipwreck, misery, and the ill-treatment they received. There were four or five of the crew saved and taken to Australia by the ship *Osprey*. As they landed without money or clothes, they were compelled to go to a common lodging-house, where they boarded on credit. From Australia they shipped on board a vessel bound for Callao, where they arrived as poor and as penniless as when they landed in Australia. Having heard of the riches of Peru, and being determined to punish the captain for the part he took in cheating them when they first shipped on board his vessel, they deserted on the first opportunity. After concealing themselves two or three days in Lima, they worked their way into the interior, living by charity as they went on. Joe was married to a native woman, with whom he resided some time on the hills, and whom he abandoned, being afraid of being murdered by her former lover. Yorkey was a sober, steady man, could read and write, and tell as interesting a tale as any sailor on board.

I will here cite one very important fact in connection with the guns in the various batteries during the action of the 2nd of May, 1866. The most of our new guns were disparted, but the old guns were not. As disparting a gun, and the object of dis-

parting it, may not be well known to the public, I will describe it in the language of a gunner. Owing to the rolling of a ship at sea, the disparting of naval guns is of greater importance than guns mounted on shore.

By disparting is meant dividing the difference of the diameters of the breech and muzzle of the gun by two; and if a sight the height of that half difference were placed on the muzzle of the gun, a line of sight would be created perfectly parallel to the cylinder or bore of the piece. Suppose two frigates engaged at one hundred fathoms' distance, the guns of one of these only being disparted, a decided advantage is possessed by that ship over the other frigate; for there can be little doubt but the guns of the latter ship would be directed by the upper surface of the gun, and the consequence would be that the shot would go from 18 to 20 feet above the ports of her opponent.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A CONTRIBUTOR.

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

DEAR SIR—I have read with a good deal of interest the series of "Experiences" which a gentleman who formerly occupied the editorial chair of *The Miscellany* has been contributing to your pages for some weeks past. In this interest I have no doubt your readers have pretty generally participated. The mysteries of editorship, for some occult reason or other, possess an unaccountable fascination, even for the general reader who is free from literary aspirations; who is not in the least afflicted with the terrible malady—generally, alas! chronic and incurable—known as *cacoëthes scribendi*; and who never even saw his name in print. But for those readers who have tasted type, and have contributed to periodical or other literature, the interest is intensified a hundredfold. The latter are able pretty fully to comprehend and appreciate the editor's reflections, to vouch for the general accuracy of his descriptions, and even, to some extent, to sympathize with his difficulties. Speaking simply for myself, I may say that I recognize felicitous touches in many passages of the "Experiences;" and, better still, I recognize in other passages a generosity and kindness of heart which my own experience leads me to believe by no means universal

among the editorial fraternity. It must be harrowing in the extreme for an editor whose heart is composed of something more susceptible to kindly impressions than the nether millstone to receive such a communication as that of the poor lunatic, set out in the first instalment of the "Experiences." There is a simple, unaffected pathos about that despairing, broken-hearted wail of a shattered constitution and an enfeebled brain, to which no words of mine can give adequate expression. To receive such a letter as that, and to feel conscious of his utter impotence to do anything to alleviate his fellow-man's terrible calamity, must have induced a hypochondriacal train of thought on the part of the editor of *The Miscellany* for the rest of that day, at least. It was probably something of this sort that made Thackeray's editorial burden too weighty for his shoulders to bear.

I have not taken pen in hand this evening, however, to dilate upon the miseries and inconveniences incidental to the editorial position. Sooth to say, editors, generally speaking, are sufficiently able to do that for themselves. Many of them, indeed, are a great deal too fond of making themselves ridiculous in that way. To judge from their own account of the matter, there is no calling under heaven so irksome, so laborious, so difficult, so unremunerative, so unsatisfactory, and in every conceivable respect so utterly abominable, as theirs. I have sometimes wondered if they are addle-headed enough to suppose that the veriest dolt in Christendom—or heathendom either, for that matter—is ever by any chance taken in by this silly, conventional, stereotyped twaddle. I wonder if they are ignorant of the circumstance that it at once occurs, even to the most commonplace intellect, upon a perusal of such senseless jeremiads, to ask the very obvious and pertinent question—Why the dickens don't you cut the concern, if you dislike it so much? Why don't you go to boot-blacking, stone-breaking, mud-collecting, or some other congenial occupation: something for which you are fitted, and which you won't find too great a strain upon your faculties? Is it because you are sacrificing yourself from a high sense of your duty to the public? Because, if so, the public are so ungrateful as to give you no credit for your exalted philanthropy. The public, you know, are coarse. They are so ungenerous and il-

liberal as to believe that you would at once turn your attention to some other pursuit, unless you found your present one more to your taste, upon the whole, than any other.

Yes, messieurs the editors, there are, beyond question, some splendid fellows among you—fellows to whom the noble profession of letters is something more than a means of livelihood; fellows who are doing what in them lies to set the world right. But I don't think that, as a class, you are much better or wiser than your neighbours, who don't hold themselves out before the world as lineal descendants of Solomon. Many of you are most intolerable grumblers. Your pens never grow weary of retailing your petty grievances, and enlarging upon your manifold sufferings. You rail at the imperfections and puerilities of the articles forwarded to you for perusal, and which you are compelled to reject. Well, nothing more natural than that you should receive an overwhelming percentage of worthless manuscripts. *That* is a necessary incident to the position you occupy; and it is no such dire calamity, after all, as you would fain have your readers believe. Did it never occur to you that there are two sides to the question, and that the poor devil whose article you have "declined with thanks" might be able to make out a tolerably plausible story on *his* side? Is it not within the bounds of possibility that *his* bed is not bestrewn with roses, and that his burden is much heavier to bear than yours? You have only done your duty in rejecting his "Ode to the Sea;" and if you are more than the nine hundred and ninety-ninth part of a man, you will do your duty without grumbling and whining whenever you can find the shadow of a shade of an excuse for doing so. Who are you, that you should be continually thrusting your petty miseries in the face of the world? *You* set yourselves up as teachers of the public mind! For shame—for shame! Is there not a plethora of real, genuine, tangible misery and suffering in this vast, infinite London for you to write about—if you have brains and capacity to write—instead of setting up your selfish, contemptible boo-hoo, because, forsooth, Miss Laura Matilda has sent you a few pages of balderdash to pass judgment upon? And, moreover, you are not nearly so infallible in your judgments as to the merits of MSS. as you would like us to believe. Why, it is only a few years since two of the most

experienced of your tribe rejected "Sartor Resartus," not upon the ground that it was unsuited to the popular taste—that might have been excused; but upon the ground—expressed under the rose—that there was absolutely nothing in it. At least half a dozen of you refused to have anything to say to "Vanity Fair" at any price. The greatest English thinker of modern times, and the most finished satirist of this century, might both have gone down to their graves "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung," if they had not been wise enough to rate your judgment at its true value, and to persevere in spite of your hostile opinion. And the list might be extended almost to infinity. How many of you put forth your mightiest efforts to crush Byron and Wordsworth, like a pack of yelping mongrel curs baying two kings of the forest? How many rising hopes have you blighted in the bud? How many shy, timid, mute, inglorious Miltons, less slenderly endowed with vigour and elasticity of temperament than were Carlyle, Thackeray, Byron, and Wordsworth—how many such have gone down to oblivion from the circumstance of your sheer incapacity to distinguish good work from bad? You didn't kill poor Keats, as George Gordon accused you of doing; but you sent him to Abraham's bosom before his time. You, John Wilson Croker—but, no; you are gone where I trust you will meet with a more merciful criticism than you ever had the grace to pen while you were in the flesh. And you, Francis Jeffrey. You were in many respects a glorious fellow, I admit; and I apologize to your manes for introducing your name in such close proximity to Rigby's; but, you see, you made a tremendous mistake about Wordsworth. The "Excursion" did "do," you see, notwithstanding your prediction to the contrary; and it will probably be read when you are forgotten.

Another most offensive peculiarity incident to certain of the editorial fraternity is that, according to their own showing, they are invested with absolute infallibility. Brown, Jones, and Robinson may err, like the rest of their fellow-mortals; but editors are never in the wrong. As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle." Armed with the omnipotent "we," and with their faces concealed behind the mask of the anonymous, it is scarcely to be wondered at that they generally get the better of their opponents,

who can only use the first person singular, and who are compelled to append a signature of some sort, even if it be a *nom de plume*. And the contest, in other respects, is far from being equal. The editor can have the last word, in spite of his adversary; and, as has often been remarked, that last word generally means victory.

The mannerism, too, indulged in by editors in general goes a great way with the uninitiated who do not understand the trick. The cant of religious hypocrisy is unspeakably disgusting; but it is scarcely more so than is the cant of the editor of the *Tautological Review*, who, when he wishes to express his assent to a particular doctrine, without committing himself very positively upon the subject, remarks that "We see nothing to contra-indicate the propriety of entertaining such a supposition."

To tell the truth, Mr. Editor, I don't feel by any means confident that either you or any other editor in London will have the generosity to publish these "Experiences." The ground for this lack of confidence is my knowledge how chary all your fraternity are of giving publicity to a little wholesome truth about yourselves and your belongings, when such truth does not tend to the exaltation of your profession in the eyes of the public. I would by no means be understood to assert, however, that the acrimonious remarks above written have reference to you, or to the editorial profession as a whole. To make such an assertion would simply be to render myself ridiculous. I believe—in fact, I know—that very many English editors are honourable, large-minded, and reasonably conscientious men—men who are honest and generous to recognize merit wherever they find it. But you know as well as I do that there are editors in London whose incapacity and unfitness for the editorial position is a byword in the profession. You know that there are others who, trading upon the strength of illustrious names, which they themselves have done nothing to render illustrious, hold themselves out as being on a par with their betters. And you know that there are at least some who are richly deserving of every word I have written.

The somewhat editor of *The Miscellany*, though not quite free from the prevailing cant of his tribe, writes in a more straightforward manner than most of his brethren of the editorial quill. Moreover, he has liberality enough to suggest—though remotely—

that there may be two sides even to the question of editorial difficulties. My purpose in writing these papers is to argue the question from the *other* side, and to contemplate the matter from the contributor's point of view. I intend to give some account of my own experiences as a contributor to periodical literature. It may possibly be inferred by your readers, from what I have already written, that I am a disappointed littérateur who has never been able to induce editors to accept his work, and that I am relieving my overwrought feelings by pouring out the vials of my wrath upon the fraternity. You, however, Mr. Editor, can vouch for the contrary; and on my own account I may say that I have had less personal reason to complain of want of editorial appreciation than three-fourths of the writers who live by literature in this city. From most editors with whom it has been my fortune to come in contact—yourself amongst the number—I have received the utmost kindness and courtesy. From others—but let me not anticipate. Permit me to tell my story, and to leave yourself and your readers to judge between those others and me.

I took up my abode in this country about six months ago. For years past I have been more or less connected with the periodical press of America. When I say "more or less," I simply mean that I have been an irregular contributor to certain monthly magazines, and that for a short time I was exclusively engaged on the staff of a daily newspaper, the name of which is occasionally heard on this side of the Atlantic. I mention these facts in order that it may be understood that I was not quite unversed in the mysteries of authorship and proof sheets at the time of my arrival in this country; and that, in coming over here with the design of connecting myself with the English press, I may be supposed to have had at least some idea of the difficulties of such an undertaking. I may add, that though my means were limited, they were and are sufficient to preclude the necessity of my becoming a burden upon the parish, even though I should never receive a penny from an English publisher.

Through the good offices of a gentleman whose name is among the first in contemporary English literature, I succeeded, before I had been in England a month, in forming a connection with two respectable London magazines. Had it not been for his

generous kindness to a total stranger and a foreigner, I could not have hoped to get into print so soon; and I would certainly be the most ungrateful of mortals if I did not entertain a lively sense of his goodness. But these two magazines could not be expected to devote all their space to my contributions, to the total exclusion of the rest of the vast army of authors who had prior claims, and I was consequently left with considerable spare time on my hands. I accordingly determined to try my fortune with other periodicals, without any introduction at all; and having written an article which appeared to me to be about up to the mark of the *Omnium Gatherum*, I despatched it, with a brief note referring to the title of the MS., to the editor of that magazine. His name had been familiar to me for many years, for his father had made it immortal.

In the course of a fortnight or so, the postman brought my MS. back to me, together with a lithograph letter, the precise contents of which I don't remember; but the purport of it was that my MS. was "declined with thanks." Well, I ran my eye over the article again; and though I could see no particular reason why it should have been rejected, I must needs confess that it was not such an effusion as would have been likely to confer literary immortality upon me, even if it had been accepted and published. Still, this was my first experience of rejection, and it gave me a sensation of humiliation. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.* But, of course, I never dreamed of feeling aggrieved. I had simply offered a commodity for sale, and the editor had not thought proper to buy. The notice of rejection had been conveyed in courteous language, and I had no ground of complaint. I had sufficient good sense to say to myself, "You must do something better than this. The editor of the *Omnium Gatherum* has numerous friends who could have written this without producing any symptoms of softening of the brain; and it is only natural that, other things being equal, he should give them the preference." I accordingly selected another and more attractive subject—a subject, too, with which I was quite familiar—and took considerable pains to treat it to the best of my ability. When the MS. was completed, I forwarded it, with another letter referring to it by name, and this time I felt pretty certain of acceptance.

I, of course, enclosed stamps to pay return postage in case of rejection.

A day or two afterwards, while in conversation with a literary friend (who is himself an editor of a respectable magazine, and who is well informed as to the periodical press of this city and its conductors), I incidentally mentioned the circumstance of my having forwarded a contribution to the *Omnium Gatherum*. He informed me, rather to my surprise, that the editor of that magazine is rather a degenerate scion of so worthy a sire; that he is devoid of literary ability; that he has very hazy notions as to the amenities of the profession; that he is surrounded by a clique of hungry hangers-on of the late management, for whom he is in a measure bound to provide; and that his own talents run in a sporting direction rather than a literary one. My friend predicted that my contribution would be returned to me unread.

A month elapsed without my having heard anything more about the matter. I then wrote and posted to the editor the following letter:—

"DEAR SIR—Will you kindly inform me if you have read my MS. called '—', and whether you intend to use it?—and oblige, yours faithfully, "—"

I enclosed a stamped envelope, addressed to myself. A week passed by ere a reply came. I am unable to give its contents verbatim, for I threw it into the fire. This time, however, it was an autograph letter, and not a lithograph. It seemed to have been written for the express purpose of causing annoyance. There was nothing about the MS. being declined with thanks. It stated that the editor had read "the accompanying paper," and that he regretted that it was "not quite up to the requirements of the *Omnium Gatherum*."

I am free to confess that this communication stirred my bile. Not quite up to the requirements, forsooth! Why the article was considerably above the high water mark of the last twelve months of that periodical. And where was the necessity for putting the matter in such an offensive shape? Could he not have returned the MS. without any such gratuitously hostile criticism, even if it had been the veriest farrago of balderdash that ever was written? It was not the act of a gentleman. I am much mistaken if it was the act of one who could by any possible train-

ing have been made a gentleman; and I determined to waste a sheet of good letter paper in acquainting him with my opinion of his conduct.

If you *have* tears, prepare to shed them now.

I marked the letter "Private." I think I can re-write the contents pretty clearly from memory.

"DEAR SIR—Yours of yesterday, referring to my article called '——', has just reached my hands. As your opinion is so decided as to the unsuitableness of the article in question, it certainly seems to me that it would have been more courteous on your part had you signified your disapproval several weeks ago. With reference to your gratuitous criticism, I may say that I am not in the least aware what your ideas may be as to 'the requirements of the *Omnium Gatherum*;' but I am your senior in point of years, and your senior ten times over in respect of literary knowledge and experience; and, so far as I am able to form an opinion, '——' is quite up to the standard of your magazine. To put the matter plainly, I am perfectly certain that it is rather above your ordinary mark.

"Since my arrival in this country, I have come in contact with various editors of magazines, and I must say that you are the only one from whom I have received anything but the utmost consideration and gentlemanly courtesy. I am given to understand, however, that you are more backward than any other editor in the profession in lending a helping hand to unknown contributors; and, from my own experience, I am led to believe that the account I have received is true. I honour the name you bear; but permit me to add that such a line of conduct as you have adopted sits very ungracefully upon your father's son. Had all editors acted on your principle forty years ago, the world would never have heard your father's name, and Mr. Optimist would not now be engaged in writing, or the world in reading, your father's life.

"With an assurance that you shall never again be put to the trouble of rejecting an article from my pen—I remain," &c., &c.

When this letter had been written and posted, I carefully re-read my poor rejected MS. My judgment did not suggest any amendment, and I felt certain that it was sufficiently meritorious not to discredit the

pages of any magazine. Without altering a syllable, I forwarded it to the editor of one of the very best in England, and one which is a high authority in literary matters. In a few days I received notice of its acceptance, and of the probable date of its publication. I was unspeakably gratified to find that I had not erred in my judgment, and that my paper had no sooner been read by a gentleman and a cultivated man of letters than it was acknowledged at what it was worth. I could not help contrasting the tone of the two letters I had received.

I suppose, Mr. Editor, that you have read "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." Do you remember what the author says about persons who are incapable of high cultivation? It is worth quoting:—

"It is such a sad thing to be born a sneaking fellow—so much worse than to inherit a hump-back or a couple of club-feet—that I sometimes feel as if we ought to love the crippled souls with a certain tenderness which we need not waste on noble natures. One who is born with such congenital incapacity that nothing can make a gentleman of him, is entitled, not to our wrath, but to our profoundest sympathy. But as we cannot help hating *the sight* of these people, just as we do that of physical deformity, we gradually eliminate them from our society. We love them, but open the window and let them go."

If you think these experiences "up to the requirements" of ONCE A WEEK, pray give your readers the benefit of them, and you shall have more ere long.

DEAN RAMSAY.

THE eminent Scottish divine, scholar, and humourist, Dean Ramsay, quitted this world for a better on the 27th of December last. He was in his eightieth year. His remains were interred on Thursday, January 2nd, in the burial-ground attached to St. John's Episcopal Church, in the presence of the magistrates and council and various public bodies of Edinburgh. The late Dean, though a minister of the Scotch Episcopal Church, was educated at Cambridge, and held English orders. He had no sympathy with the high sacerdotal views generally held by Scotch Episcopalians, and habitually cultivated friendly intercourse with the clergy and members of the Esta-

blished Kirk and other Protestant communities. His literary works were numerous; but to English readers he was, without doubt, best known by his "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character," which appeared in 1857.

This is one of those books which live long after the hands that penned them are dust. It is full of choice stories that illustrate to perfection the national character of the people among whom the Dean lived. It presented to English readers a new view of Scottish life: the state of society among the members of the Episcopalian Church, besides introducing us to a most interesting assemblage of ministers, lairds, their servants, Scotch ladies, and almost every type of the national character—to ministers such as the worthy clergyman of Fifeshire, of whom the Dean says:—"An admirable story of a quiet pulpit rebuke is traditionary in the East Neuk of Fife, and told of a seceding minister, a Mr. Shirra, a man well remembered by the older generation for many excellent and some eccentric qualities. An officer of a volunteer corps, on duty in the place, very proud of his fresh uniform, had come to Mr. Shirra's church, and walked about as if looking for a seat, but, in fact, to show off his dress, which he saw was attracting attention from some of the less grave members of the congregation. He came to his place, however, rather quickly, on Mr. Shirra quietly remonstrating, 'Oh, man, will ye sit down, and we'll see your new breeks when the kirk's dune.'"

This Mr. Shirra was the gentleman who, on reading from the 116th Psalm, "I said in my haste, All men are liars," quietly observed—

"Indeed, David, an' ye had been i' this parish, ye might hae said it at your leisure."

A story that is immortal, if hackneyed by the wear and tear of more than one generation. Another good story is the following:—

"A faithful minister of the gospel, being one day engaged in visiting some members of his flock, came to the door of a house where his gentle tapping could not be heard for the noise of contention within. After waiting a little, he opened the door and walked in, saying, with an authoritative voice—

"I should like to know who is the head o' this house."

"Weel, sir," said the husband and father, 'if ye sit down a wee, we'll maybe be able to

tell ye; for we're just tryin' to settle that point.'"

But in the church itself many of the best things told by the Dean occurred, the parish idiot often being a principal actor in them; as when the preacher, seeing half his congregation asleep, thus admonished them:

"You see, even Jamie Fraser the idiot does not fall asleep, as so many of you are."

Jamie—not liking, perhaps, to be thus designated—coolly replied:

"An' if I hadna been an idiot, I wad hae been sleeping too."

And—

"Another of these imbeciles belonging to Peebles had been sitting at church for some time listening attentively to a strong representation from the pulpit of the guilt of deceit and falsehood in Christian characters. He was observed to turn red and grow very uneasy, until at last, as if wincing under the supposed attack upon himself personally, he roared out—

"Indeed, minister, there's mair leears in Peebles than me."

The stories of the lairds are quite as rich. Though these proprietors were generally full of whisky when they said their good things, they are none the less amusing "for a' that." The story of the lost wig is among the best of these. A worthy laird driving his gig with his servant across a wild moor, the wind, blowing fresh, carries off hat and wig from his head. He recognises his hat when it is restored to him, but demurs at the other article.

"It's no my wig, Hairy, lad—it's no my wig," mumbles the laird.

"You'd better tak' it, sir," answers Harry, with sardonic significance, "for there's nae waile o' wigs on Munrimmon Moor."

"Nae waile" means no choice—a state of affairs quite in accordance with the natural order of things on a moor.

The servants in the late Dean's book are even more amusing than their masters. What, in its way, is better than the retort of the servant leaving a miserly house, with his master? The laird says—

"Jamie, you are drunk."

"Indeed, sir," answers Jamie, with inefable disdain, '*I wish I war.*'"

Or that remark of the butler, bewildered by the services required of him at a dinner party on a larger scale than usual—

"Cry a'thegither, that's the way to be served."

To every reader of these notes who has not read the genial author's "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character," we would say, read it. To those who have read it, we would by all means say, read it again.

THE FLOWER AND THE SUN.

THE sun one summer's day had softly wooed
 A white carnation, with his golden gleams;
 But all in vain—for she, the pretty prude,
 Would not be warmed to love by sunny beams:
 For white carnations coyly express—
 No flower coy as she was ever found.
 She strove to hide amid a pretty tress
 Of gentle maiden hair that grew around,
 She seemed too timorous to meet his gaze;
 And as he smiled upon her from above,
 Oh, for some kindly hand her crest to raise,
 As drooped her head before his ardent love.

A rain-cloud wept for him: that flood of tears—
 As unrequited he was seeking rest—
 That stream whose bosom floats both hopes and
 fears
 Found a response while falling on her breast.
 She raised her head; the dying sunbeams rushed
 With ruddy joy forth from the cloud above;
 They shining on her, the carnation blushed
 Into a *pink one*, or a woman's love!
 Rejoicing Nature testified the while
 Her beaming gladness in an arched smile.

TABLE TALK.

I KNOW a Bishop who has always proclaimed against clerical beards and moustachios, with the constancy that the prophet in the old time denounced the sins of Ahab. His feeling against these appendages was of the same genus as that which advocates the celibacy of the clergy; but he did not know that bishops, as well as others, are subject to inconsistencies. He hated everything that had the slightest flavour of Rome in it; but he did not perceive that a shaven chin and lip have the flavour of the Romish priest in them. They have it in about the same proportion as rabbit has the flavour of hare; but the Bishop's intellectual or moral palate did not detect it. Prejudice is very blind, and his lordship, having conceived a feeling against beards, like a runaway horse, saw nothing of the road before him. In his private charges to candidates for ordination, he used to state, with an emphasis tinged with menace, his views on the subject. It must be evident to every one, he said, that there is a great difference between a goat and a man. During the examinations which preceded ordinations, the Bishop came into the room with eyes turned more towards the young

men's chins than their papers. He scrutinized their faces as an officer on parade does the knapsacks of his soldiers. Once a candidate ventured to appear as nature made him, and immediately the Bishop's eye settled on him, as that of the eagle on the carcase that it sees afar off. He called his chaplain to him, and rigidly commented on the circumstance, with as much emotion as if he had seen the unfortunate gentleman pocketing one of his silver spoons; and the end of it was that he appeared at the minster the following Sunday so changed in physiognomy, that his own mother recognized him with great difficulty. This was at a time when the beard movement amongst the clergy was just beginning. It is now at its meridian, and a clergyman without one is almost as rare as a "black swan."

A GENTLEMAN, bearing the not uncommon name of John Jones, complains in a contemporary of the difficulties arising in his experience of life from having a "common name." He says:—"To give one or two illustrations of the mistakes and misfortunes that have happened to members of the first and largest of these families, whose name will be found more frequently, perhaps, in the annals of fame than any other I have mentioned. Well do I remember, when waiting, with the most painful anxiety, the arrival of a letter which was to make me one of the happiest or most miserable of mortals, that by an unfortunate mistake it was delivered to my namesake and mine enemy, living in the same street, who, after carefully perusing it to assure himself that it was really not intended for him, forwarded it to me with the seal broken. The pleasing nature of the contents scarcely overcame my mortification at the disaster." Now, as Mr. John Jones says, a lady can always rid herself of an objectionable name by marrying. It has been suggested that persons having very common names should take the maiden name of their wives, if they are determined to change their style at all. Better still, perhaps, rest satisfied with the name their fathers gave them; or, following the example of the gentleman who made John Bug into Norfolk Howard, we should have those names now regarded as the pick of the peerage, as general as the most common names now known to the heralds.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER IX.



IN the evening, about nine o'clock, Mr. MacIntyre presented himself at Philip's lodgings. He was greatly changed for the better. With much prudence he had spent the whole of the sovereign in effecting an alteration in his outward appearance, calculating that his old pupil would be at least good for two or three more golden tokens of esteem. He was now, looked at from behind, a gentleman of reduced means; everything, from his black coat to his boots, having a secondhand and "reach me down" look, and nothing attaining to what might be called a perfect fit. The coat was obtained by exchange or barter, the old pea jacket

having been accepted in lieu of payment, while the other articles were the result of long haggling and beating down. He looked, however, complacently on his new garb, as indicating a partial return to respectability.

Philip greeted him with a friendly shake of the hand.

"Why, man, do you mean to say that a sovereign has done all that?"

"All," said his tutor. "I'll just tell you how I did it. First, the trousers. Sixpence the man allowed for the old ones, which I left with him. They're just dropping to pieces with fatigue. Eh, they've had a hard time of it for many years. Then I got a secondhand flannel shirt. He wouldn't give me anything for the old one. Then I got the coat for my pea jacket—which, though a most comfortable garment, was hardly, you'll observe, the coat for a Master of Arts of an old and respectable University."

"Well—well— Did you get anything to eat?"

"Dinner. Tenpence. I'm not saying that I'm not hungry."

Philip rang the bell, and ordered some supper, which his guest devoured ravenously.

"Short commons of late, I am afraid?"

"Vara short, vara short! I'll trouble you for two—three more slices of that beef. Ah, Phil, what an animal is the common ox! You feel it when you come to be a stranger to him. And bottled stout. When—eh, man?"

He took a pull which finished the bottle, and proceeded to eat; talking, at intervals, quite in his old style.

"Observe. The development of the grateful feeling, commonly supposed to be wanting—thank ye, Phil, one more slice, with some of the fat and a bit of the brown—wanting to the savage races, must be mainly due to the practice of a higher order of eating. My supper has lately been the penny bloater, with a baked potato. No, I really cannot eat any more. The spirit is willing—

for I am still hungry, Phil, still hungry—but the capacity of the stomach is limited. I fear I have already injudiciously crowded the space. Is that brandy, Phil, on the sideboard?"

Philip rose and brought the bottle, with a tumbler and cold water, and placed it before him.

"Brandy," he murmured. "It has been my dream for four long months. I have managed, sometimes, a glass of gin. But brandy!—oh, blessed consoler of human suffering! Brandy!" He was clutching the bottle and standing over it with greedy eyes. "Brandy!—water of life!—no, water that droons the sense of life—that brings us forgetfulness of everything, and restores the fire of youth—destroys the gnawings of hunger. Brandy! And they say we musn't drink! Oh, Phil, my favourite pupil, for those who have memories, brandy is your only medicine."

He filled a tumbler half full of spirit, added a little water, and drank it off at a draught. Then he looked round, sighed, sat down, and, to Philip's astonishment, burst into violent sobbing. This phenomenon was quite unprecedented in the history, so far as Philip knew, of his late tutor.

"Nay," he said, kindly, "we shall manage to mend matters, somehow. Cheer up, man. Have another glass."

Mr. MacIntyre gave a profound sniff, and looked up through his tears.

"Give me a pocket handkerchief first, Phil. I want to blow my nose. I pawned my last—it was a silk one—for tenpence-ha'penny."

Philip brought him one from his bed-room, and he began to mop up.

Then he took another glass of brandy and water.

"Tears—it is indeed a relief to have an old friend to talk to—tears are produced from many causes. There are tears of gratitude, of joy, of sorrow, even of repentance, if you think you are going to be found out. Mine are none of these. They rise from that revulsion o' feeling projuiced by a sudden and strong contrast. Obsairve. The man unexpectedly or violently removed from a state of hopeless destitution to the prospect of affluence must either cry or laugh—and not even a philosopher can always choose which. I have got decent clothes, an old friend; and my brains—a little damaged by a hard life, perhaps—are still greatly superior to the average."

"And you have been really destitute?"

"For four months I have been a walking advertisement. Part of the time I was getting eighteenpence a day as one of the Associated Boardmen. Eh, Philip Durnford, think of your old tutor becoming an Associated Boardman! Then I got dru—I mean I took too much one day, and they turned me out in the cold. I starved a day or two, and then got employment at one-and-three-pence, which I have had, off and on, ever since. It is not a difficult employment. There is little responsibility. No sense of dignity or self-respect is required. On the Sunday, there is no work to be done; consequently, for four months I have cursed the Sawbath—the Lord forgive me! Don't ask me too much, Philip: it has been a sad time—a terrible time. I am half-starved. I have had to associate with men of no education and disagreeable habits. A bad time—a bad time." He passed his hand across his forehead, and paused a moment. "A time of bad dreams. I shall never forget it, never. It will haunt me to my grave—poison my nights, and take the pleasure out of my days. Don't ask me about it. Let me forget it."

"Tell me only what you like," said Philip.

"The passions, I have discovered, the follies, and the ambitions of man depend a'together on the stomach. The hungry man, who has been hungry for three months, can only hope for a good meal. That is the boundary of his thoughts. He envies none but the fat. He has no eyes for beauty. Helen would pass unnoticed by a sandwich man, only for plumpness. He has no perception of the beauties of nature, save in the streakiness of beef; none for those of art, save in the cookshops. He has no hatred in his heart, nor any love. And of course he has no conscience. Obsairve, my pupil, that religion is a matter for those who are assured of this world's goods. It vanishes at the first appearance of want. Hence a clause in the Lord's Prayer."

"You—I mean your companions between the boards—are honest, I suppose?"

"Ah, well—that's as it may be. It is one of the advantages of the profession that you must be honest, because you can't run if you do steal anything. No line of life presents fewer opportunities for turning a dishonest penny. Otherwise—you see—stomach is king at all times; and if not

satisfied, my young friend, stomach becomes God."

"Tell me, if you can, how you came to fall into these straits."

"*Infandum jubes renovare dolorem.* Eh!—the Latin tags and commonplaces, how they stick. It is a kind of consolation to quote them. When you saw me last was on that unfortunate occasion when you treated your old tutor with unwarrantable harshness. I have long lamented the misconception which led you to that line of conduct. Verbal reproach alone would have been ill-fitting to your lips; but actual personal violence! Ah, Philip! But all is forgiven and forgotten. You went away. I applied to M. de Villeroy for a testimonial. I still preserve the document he was good enough to send me. It is here."

He produced a paper from a bundle which he carried in an old battered pocket-book.

"There are papers here, Phil, that will interest you some day, when you have learned to trust me. Now listen. This is what your poor father's old friend said of your old tutor."

He shook his head in sorrow, and read—

"I have been asked to speak of Mr. MacIntyre's fitness for the post of an instructor of youth. I can assert with truth that I have on several occasions seen him sober; that Mr. Durnford, his late employer, never detected him in any dishonesty; that his morality, in this neighbourhood, has been believed in by no one; and that, in his temperate intervals, he is sometimes industrious."

"There, Philip. Think of that."

"You do not show that testimonial much, I suppose?" said Philip.

"No," replied the philosopher. "I keep it as a proof of the judecical blindness which sometimes afflicts men of good sense. M. de Villeroy is dead, and so it matters little now. Do you know where Miss Madeleine is?"

"No. In Palmiste, I suppose."

"There ye're wrong. She's in London. I saw her yesterday with an old lady in Regent-street, and followed her home. She's bonny, vara bonny, with her black hair and big eyes. Oh, she's bonny. But uplifted with pride, I misdoubt. Why don't you marry her, Philip? She's got plenty of money.

Arthur will marry her if you don't. Give me Arthur's address."

"You want to borrow money of him, I suppose?"

"No. I want just to ask him to give me money. Ye're not over rich, I'm afraid, Philip, yourself, my laddie."

Philip laughed.

"My father gave me five thousand pounds. All that is left of it is in our old agent's hands in Palmiste. I get ten per cent. for it. As I only got a hundred and fifty last February, a good lot of it must be gone. And I've had another little dig into the pile since then."

"Ay, ay?—that's bad; that's vara bad. But perhaps a time will come for you as well as the rest of the world."

"Arthur can help you, and I dare say will. But you must not tell him too much."

"I do not intend to tell him anything," said the man of experience, loftily. "Except lies."

"Tell me something, however," said Philip.

"Tell me how you got into such a hole."

"I went to Australia from Palmiste. Spent all my money in Melbourne, trying to get something to do, and at last I got put into the school of a little township up country, where my chief work was to cane the brats. Such an awfu' set of devils! That lasted a year. Then there came a terrible day."

He stopped and sighed.

"I shall never forget that day. It was a Saturday, I remember. The boys were more mutinous than usual, and I caned them all—there were thirty-five. And when one was caned, the others all shouted and laughed. At twelve, I read the prayers prescribed by the authorities, with my usual warmth and unction. Then I dismissed the boys. Nobody moved. There was a dead silence, and I confess I felt alarmed. Presently, the five biggest boys got up, and approached my desk with determined faces. I had a presentiment of what would happen, and I turned to fly. It was too late."

"What did they do to you?"

"They tied me up, sir. They tied me up to my own desk, and then they laid on. They gave their reverend dominie the most awful flogging that ever schoolboy had. None too small, sir, to have a cut in. None so forgiving as to shirk his turn. Not one, Philip, relented at the last moment, and spared some of his biceps. Pairfect silence

reigned; and when it was over, they placed me back in my chair, with my cane in my hand; and then the school dispersed. What I felt, Philip, more than the ignominy, was the intense pain. A red-hot iron might produce a similar, but not a greater agony, if applied repeatedly on every square inch over a certain area of the body. A thirty-handed Briareus, if he turned schoolmaster, could alone rival the magnitude of that prodigious cowhiding.

"Next day I left the town. It was during church time; but the boys were waiting for me, and as I stole out with my bundle in my hand, they ran me down the street on a rail, singing 'Drucken Sawnie!' That was a very bad time I had then.

"I tried Sydney after that, and got on pretty well in business—till I failed; and then the judge wanted to refuse my certificate, because, he said, the books were fraudulently kept. That wasn't true, for they were not kept at all. So I came away, and got to the Cape. A poor place, Phil—very poor, and dull; but the drink is good, and the food is cheap. I learned to speak Dutch, and was very near marrying the daughter of a Dutch farmer, well to do, only for an unlucky accident. Just before the wedding, my cruel fate caused me to be arrested on a ridiculous charge of embezzlement. Of course, I was acquitted; but the judge—who ought to be prosecuted for defamation of character—ruined me by stating that I only got off by the skin of my teeth, because the jury understood English imperfectly. I came back to England, and went down to see my relations. My cousin, only four times removed—the baillie of Auchnatoddy—ordered me out of his house, and wadna give me bite nor sup. Then I came up to town, and here I am, ever since. Ye won't do me an ill turn by telling Arthur my story, will you, Philip?"

"Not I; particularly as you have only told me half of it."

"May be—may be. The other half I keep to myself."

It was just as well he did, for among the second half were one or two experiences of prison life, which might not have added to his old pupil's respect for him. These other adventures he omitted, partly perhaps out of modesty, and partly out of a fear that their importance might be exaggerated.

The astonishing thing was, the way in which he emerged from all his troubles. They seemed to be without any effect upon

his energies or spirits. Utterly careless about loss of character, perfectly devoid of moral principle, he came up, after each disaster, seemingly refreshed by the fall. Mother Earth revived him; and he started anew, generally with a few pounds in his pocket, and always some new scheme in his head, to prey upon the credulity of good and simple men. That he had not yet succeeded, argued, he considered, want of luck rather than absence of merit.

His projects were not of very extraordinary cleverness. But he was unscrupulous enough to succeed. Cleverness and freedom from scruples do somehow seem the two main requisites to produce the success of wealth. The cleverest rogue becomes the richest man, often the most revered. He has been known, for instance, to get into the House of Lords. Mr. Gladstone will always, if he spends £20,000 on the cause, make him a baronet. But quite lately a new feeling had come over Mr. MacIntyre. He was beginning to doubt himself. For four months he had lived on about three half-crowns a week, and as the days went on, and he saw no chance of escape, he grew more and more despondent. It was a new sensation, this of privation. He suffered, for the first time in his life. And also, for the first time, he saw no way to better things—no single spot of blue in all the horizon. Rheumatic twinges pinched him in the shoulders. He was fifty-three years of age. He had not a penny saved, nor a friend to give him one. In the evening he crept back to his miserable lodging, brooding over his fate; and in the morning he crept out again to his miserable work, brooding still.

But now a change, unexpected and sudden. *Hinc ille lacrymæ*. Hence those tears of the tutor, wrung from a heart whose power of philosophy was undermined by a long-continued emptiness of stomach. That night he slept on Philip's sofa; and the next day, after taking a few necessities—such as a shirt, a waistcoat, collar, and so on—from his benefactor's wardrobe, making reflections all the while, he made a breakfast of enormous dimensions, and proceeded to call upon Arthur.

"Ye'll remember, Mr. Philip Durnford," he said, putting on his hat—"by the way, lend me two or three pounds, which I shall repay from what I get from Arthur: I must have a better hat—ye'll remember to forget the little confidential narration I imparted to

you last night. It is not always possible to preserve the prudence of a philosopher, and to know what things should be said and what concealed—*quæ dicenda, quæ celanda sint*. I told you more than I should. But I trust to your promise."

He found Arthur at work in his usual purposeless way. That is, he was surrounded by a great pile of books, and had a pen in his hand. Arthur was not happy unless he was following up some theory or investigating some "point," and had a Sybaritish way of study which led to no results, and seemed to promise nothing: a kind of work which very often lands the student among the antiquarians and archæologists. But there was a tone about Arthur which impressed Mr. MacIntyre with a sense of constraint and awkwardness. Philip he somehow felt to belong to his own stratum of humanity. With Philip he was at ease, and could talk familiarly. Arthur belonged to that higher and colder level where self-respect was essential, and any confidences of the criminal Christian would be out of place. Philip, for instance, had insisted upon his fortifying his stomach against the rawness of the morning air with a glass of brandy before going out. Arthur, on the other hand, offered him nothing; but, giving him a chair, stood leaning against the mantelshelf, and contemplating his visitor from his height of six feet.

"I hope you are doing well, Mr. MacIntyre?" he began.

"I am not doing well," replied the Scotchman—"I'm doing very badly."

"I do not ask your history since I saw you last."

"Mr. Arthur Durnford, you are my old pupil—I may add, my favourite pupil—and you are privileged to say what you please. My life is open to any question you may like to ask. The failure of a school in Australia, through my—my firmness in maintaining discipline; that of a prosperous place of business in Sydney, through an unexpected rise in the Bank rate; and the breakdown of my plans in Cape Town, brought me home in a condition of extreme penury. From this I was rescued by the generosity of Lieutenant Philip Durnford, who has most liberally assisted me out of his very slender means—his very slender means. Ask me any questions you like, Mr. Durnford; but do not, if you please, insinuate that I have anything to conceal."

He smote his chest, and assumed an air of Spartan virtue.

"Well, well. Only, the fact is, Mr. MacIntyre, I remember that the last time I saw you, you were receiving punishment from Philip's hands for some disgraceful proposals."

"Pardon me—Mr. Philip was under a mistake. This, I believe, he will now acknowledge. I have forgiven him."

"I hope he was mistaken. Anyhow, my opinion of you, formed as a boy, could not possibly be favourable."

"At the time you speak of I was suffering from deepsomania. I am now recovered, thanks to having taken the pledge for a term of years. Now expired."

"What are you doing now?"

"Nothing."

"What have you been doing?"

"Starving."

"What do you want to do?"

"I want you to find me some money. I cannot promise to pay it back, because I am too poor to promise anything. But if you will advance me fifty pounds, I think I can do something with it."

Arthur took his cheque-book, and sat down, thoughtfully.

"I will do this for you. I will lend you fifty pounds, which, as you are a thrifty man, ought to last you six months. You will spend that time in looking about you, and trying to get work. At the end of six months, if you want it, I will lend you another fifty. But that is all I will do for you. And I shall specially ask Philip not to give you money."

Mr. MacIntyre was not profuse in his thanks. He took the cheque, examined it carefully, folded it, and put it in his pocket.

"I knew you'd help me," he said. "I told Philip so this morning. Can I forward you in your studies now? The philosophical system of Hamilton, for instance."

"Yes; never mind my studies, if you please. Is there anything else I can do for you?"

"I do not ca' to mind that there is. I'll look in again, when there is. Have you seen Miss Madeleine, Mr. Durnford, since she came to London?"

"Madeleine? No. Is she in London? What is her address?—how long has she been here?"

"I dare say I could find out her address. But it might cost money."

He looked so cunning as he said this, that Arthur burst out laughing.

"You are a cool hand, Mr. MacIntyre. How much would it cost?—five pounds?"

"Now, really, Mr. Arthur, to suppose that a man can run all over London for five pounds! And that to find out the address of your oldest friend."

"Well—twenty pounds?—thirty pounds? Hang it, man, I must know."

"I should think," said the philosopher, meditating, "it *might* be found for forty pounds, if the money was paid at once."

Arthur wrote another cheque, which MacIntyre put into his pocket-book as before.

"This does not prejudice the fifty pounds in six months' time?" he said. "Very well. I remember now that I have her address in my pocket. I followed her home, and asked a servant. Here it is—No. 31, Hatherley-street, Eaton-square."

"Did you speak to her?"

"Is it likely?" replied Mr. MacIntyre, thinking of his boards.

"Confess that you have done a good stroke of business this morning," said Arthur. "Ninety pounds is not bad. You can't always sell an address for forty pounds."

"Sell an address? My dear sir, you mistake me altogether. Do not, if you please, imagine that I am one of those who sell such little information as I possess. Remember, if you please, that you are addressing a Master of Arts of an ancient——"

"You are quite yourself again, Mr. MacIntyre," said Arthur. "Good morning, now. Keep away from drink, and——"

"Sir, I have already reminded you that——"

"Good morning, Mr. MacIntyre."

He went away, cashed both his cheques, and, taking lodgings, proceeded to buy such small belongings as the simplest civilization demands—such as hair brushes, linen, and a two-gallon cask of whisky. Then he ordered the servant to keep a kettle always on the hob; sat down, rubbed his hands, lit a pipe, and began to meditate.

CHAPTER X.

IT was quite true. Madeleine was in England.

Eight years since, Madeleine, the day before leaving her native island, had ridden over to Fontainebleau to take farewell of a place where she had spent so many happy days. The house was uninhabited and shut

up, but the manager of the estate was careful to keep it in repair. It all looked as it used to. The canes, clean and well kept, waving in the sunlight, in green and yellow and gray; the mill busier than ever, with its whirr of grinding wheels; the sweet, rich smell of the sugar; the huge vats of seething, foaming juice; and the whirling turbines. But the old verandah was no longer strewn with its cane mats and chairs; and when the doors were opened for her, the house felt chill and damp. She lifted the piano lid and touched the keys, shrinking back with a cry of fright. It was like a voice from the dead—so cracked, and thin, and strident was the sound. In the boys' study were their old school-books lying about, just as they had left them; in a drawer which she opened, some paper scribbled with boyish sketches. One of these represented a gentleman, whose features were of an exaggerated Scotch type, endeavouring to mount his pony. The animal was turning upon him with an air of reproach, as one saying, "Sir, you are drunk again." This was inscribed at the back, "*Philippus fecit.*" Then there was another and more finished effort, signed Arthur, of a girl's head in chalk. Perhaps the merit of this picture was slender; but Madeleine blushed when she looked at it, and took both pictures away with her.

There was no other souvenir that she cared to have; and leaving the house, she paid a visit to the garden. Oh, the garden! Where once had been pineapples were pumpkins; where had been strawberries were pumpkins; where there had once been flower beds, vegetables, or shrubs, were pumpkins. Pumpkin was king. He lay there—green, black, or golden—basking in the sun. He had devoured all, and spread himself over all.

So Madeleine came away; and under the maternal wing of the Bishopess—whose right reverend husband, as happens once in two years to all colonial bishops, had business connected with his diocese which brought him to England—was duly shipped to Southampton, and presently forwarded to Switzerland.

Education. Her guardian was a Frenchman by descent, a Swiss by choice. He had enlarged views, and brought up the girl as a liberal Protestant. He had her taught the proper amount of accomplishments. He made her talk English, though with a slight foreign accent, as well as French; and, which

was much more important, gave her ideas as to independence and unconventionality which sank deep, and moulded her whole character. Insomuch that one day she announced her intention of going away and setting up for herself.

"I am of age," she said. "I want to see the world a little. I want to make up my mind what to do with myself."

Old M. Lajardie chuckled.

"See what it is," he observed, "to bring up a girl as she ought to be brought up. My dear, if it had not been for me, you would at this moment be wanting to go into a convent."

She shook her head.

"I know the sex, child. You belong to the class which takes to religion like a duck to water. This being denied you, you will take to philanthropy, usefulness, all sorts of things. That is why I taught you English, because England is the only country possible for a full exercise of these virtues. Then you are of a temperament which would have induced blind submission in a man, and makes a delightful obstinacy in a free woman."

"Upon my word, my dear guardian—"

"And then, my child, there is another quality in you, which would have made you the most rapturous of sisters, which will make you the best and most devoted of wives. You will marry, Madeleine."

"It is possible," she said. "It may come in my way, as it does in most people's lives. But I do not count upon marriage as a part of my life."

"You are rich, Madeleine. You have—well, more than your fair share of beauty. Black hair and black eyes are common; but not such splendid hair as yours, or eyes as bright. There are girls as tall as you, but few with so good a figure."

"Don't, guardian," said Madeleine, with a little *moue* and a half-blush. "I would rather you told me of my faults."

"I know the sex, I tell you," repeated the old man. "When I was young—ah, what a thing it is to be young!—I made a profound study of the sex. It is quite true, Madeleine, though I am only an old man who says it, that even Madame Recamier herself, in her best days, had not a more finished style than yours. You will succeed, my child. You will be able to marry any one—any one you please."

"You do not imagine, I suppose, that I

am to fall in love with the first rich young man who tells me that he loves me? As if there was nothing in the world for woman to think of but love."

"Most women," went on her critic, "like to be married to a lord and master. I prophecy for you, Madeleine, that your husband will be content to obey rather than to command. So, child, you shall see the world. Let me only just write to our friend, Mrs. Longworthy, who will act as your chaperon. You will find yourself richer than you think, perhaps. All your money is in the English funds, and the interest has been used to buy fresh stock. Go now, my ward—I will think over what is best to be done."

The old man attended her to the door, and, shutting it after her, went through a little pantomime of satisfaction. That done, he took down a volume of Voltaire's "Philosophical Dictionary," and wagged his head over the wisdom that he found therein.

"Independent," he murmured. "Rich, self-reliant, able to think, not superstitious, not infected with insular prejudices, philanthropic, beautiful. She will do. *Elle ira loin, mon ami*," he said, tapping his own forehead. "You have done well. When revolutions come, and lines of thought are changed, it is good to have such women at hand, to steady the men. France rules the world, and the women rule France. *Hein?* it sounds epigrammatic. Has it been said before?"

So to England Madeleine came. A chaperon was found for her in the widow of an old friend of M. Lajardie—a certain Mrs. Longworthy, who was willing—and, more than that, able—to take her into society. They took one of those extremely comfortable little houses—the rent of which is so absurdly out of proportion to their size—close to Eaton-square: a house with its two little drawing-rooms and greenhouse at the back—a little narrow as regards dining-room accommodation, but broad enough, as Mrs. Longworthy put it, for two lone women.

Madeleine's chaperon was only remarkable for her extraordinary coziness and love of comfort. A cushiony old lady—one who sat by the fireside and purred; and, when things went bad with her, went to bed and stayed there till they came round again. An old lady who went to church every Sunday, and, like the late lamented Duke of Sussex, murmured after each commandment, "Never did that: never did that." So

that the rules of prohibition did not affect her own conscience. For all the rest, she entirely trusted and admired Madeleine, and never even ventured on a remonstrance with her.

Madeleine was what her guardian described her. In her presence most men felt themselves above their own stratum. There was a sort of gulf; and yet, with all the men's experience, the clear light of her eyes seemed to read so far beyond their actual ken. If she liked you, and talked to you, you came away from her strengthened and braced up. Beautiful, she certainly was, in a way of her own: striking, the women called her—a word which the sex generally employ when they feel envious of powers and physique beyond their own. Rolls of black hair; a pale and colourless cheek; a small and firm mouth; clear and sharply defined nostrils; eyes that were habitually limpid and soft, which yet might flash to sudden outbreaks of storm; and a figure beyond all expression *gracieuse*. A woman who could talk; one whom young warriors, having to take her into dinner, speedily felt beyond them altogether; one who lifted a man up, and made him breathe a purer air. This is, I take it, the highest function of woman. We cannot, as a rule, run comfortably in single harness, but are bound by the laws of our being to have a mate of some kind. It is surely best for us to find one whose sense of duty is stronger than our own, and whose standard is higher. We may have to do all the work; but we want a fellow in the harness to show us that the work is good, and that it behoves us to do it well.

Madeleine was not, it is certain, one of the girls whom a certain class of small poets love to style "darling," "pet Amoret," "sweet little lily." Not for any man's toy; no animated doll to please for a while, and then drop out of life; nor yet that dreadful creature, a "woman's rights" woman. Perhaps she was not clever enough.

Arthur Durnford called upon her the same day on which he got the address. He was a little prepared to gush, remembering the little sylph with whom he used to play twelve years ago. But there was no opportunity for gushing. The stately damsel who rose and greeted him with almost as much coldness as if they had parted the day before, silenced, if she did not disconcert, him.

"I knew that we should meet again some time," she said; "and I had already written to Palmiste for your address. Mrs. Longworthy, this is my old friend, Arthur Durnford, of whom I have so often told you."

He saw a little, fat old lady, with a face like a winter apple, crinkled and ruddy, sitting muffled up by the fireside.

"Come and shake hands with me, Arthur Durnford," she cried, in the pleasantest voice he had ever heard. "I knew your father when he was a wild young fellow in the Hussars. Let me look at you. Yes, you are like him. But he had black hair, and yours is brown. And you stoop—I suppose because you read books all day. Fie upon the young men of the present! They all read. In my time there was not so much reading, I can tell you, but a great deal more love-making and merriment. Now, sit down and talk to Madeleine."

She lay back on her cushions, and presently fell fast asleep, while the two talked.

They talked of Palmiste and the old days. And then a sort of constraint came upon them, because the new days of either were unknown.

"Tell me about yourself, Arthur," said Madeleine. "I am going to call you Arthur, and you shall call me Madeleine, just as we used to. Mrs. Longworthy—oh, she is asleep."

"No, my dear—only dozing. Wake me up by telling me something pleasant."

"I was going to tell Arthur that I am sure you would like him to come here a great deal—I should."

"That ought to be enough, Mr. Durnford. But I should, too. We are a pair of women, and we sometimes sit and nag at each other. Don't look at me so, Maddy—if we don't actually do it, we sometimes want to. Come a great deal, Mr. Durnford. Come as nearly every day as you can manage. It is very good for young men to have ladies' society. We shall civilize you."

"You are very kind," Arthur began.

"But I must say one thing. Do not come early in the morning. I consider that the day ought to be a grand processional triumph of temper. That is why I always take my breakfast in bed. Handle me delicately in the morning, and a child may lead me all day. Come, if you want to see me, in time for luncheon, at two; if you want to see Madeleine, at any time she tells you."

"And how is Philip?" asked Madeleine.

"Who is Philip?" said Mrs. Longworthy.

"My cousin, the son of my father's brother."

"Your father, my dear boy, never had any brothers."

"Pardon me, Mrs. Longworthy."

She shook her head, and lay back again.

"And what is your profession, Arthur?"

"I have none."

"What do you do with yourself?"

"I waste time in the best way I can. I read, write a little, make plans, and the days slip by."

"That seems very bad. Come and help me in my profession."

"What is your profession?"

"Come some morning at ten, and I will tell you. Send Philip to call upon me."

As Arthur went out of the room, he heard Mrs. Longworthy saying—

"I am not wrong. I am quite right. George Durnford was an only son. And so was his father. The De Melhuyns, quite new people, told me all about it."

A sudden light flashed upon Arthur's mind. He *knew*, in that way in which knowledge of this sort sometimes comes, that Philip was his half-brother. He was certain of it. He reasoned with himself; set up all the objections; proved to himself that the preponderance of chances was against it; marshalled all the opposite evidence; and remained absolutely certain of the truth of his conviction.

PROFESSOR POYNTER, A.R.A., ON OLD ART AND NEW ART.

THE fourth of the winter exhibitions at Burlington House of pictures by the old masters, provided jointly by the zeal and kindness of private collectors and the Royal Academicians, is now opened to the public. We leave the merits of the pictures exhibited to be dealt with by other critics, but the subject suggests the present as an appropriate occasion for a few notes on English feeling for and love of art.

Among the many excellent papers read during the season at the Royal Institution, one of those most worthy of attention was Mr. Poynter's lecture on Art. The general revival of something like a feeling for art for its own sake observable among us, and the good results already attained in the Art Schools throughout the country,

make art-teaching of the higher sort especially valuable at the present time. The improvement in domestic and ecclesiastical architecture, the greater taste displayed in the internal fittings and decorations of houses, the more artistic—*i.e.*, beautiful—forms of many articles in common use, the increasing proofs that cheapness needs not always connote ugliness and want of art, show that the teachings of the school of reformers led by Mr. Ruskin have not altogether failed in their purpose. Indeed, it would almost seem that at no very distant day, as far as it relates to manufactured products, the proverb, "cheap and nasty," will be untrue. There is no reason why the old willow pattern plate should not be displaced by a ware the shape, pattern, and colouring of which are pleasing to the eye. There is no reason why paper-hangings that are cheap should likewise be offensive to good taste, or why every article of furniture in use in our houses should be inartistic in design, because it is not made of costly material. Yet such changes can only be brought about by a demand on the part of the public who purchase such commodities. The manufacturer himself, let him be carpenter, cabinet-maker, weaver of textile fabrics, or potter, will never stir himself in the matter. The object for which he exists has been accomplished when he has succeeded in selling for a shilling what it cost him eightpence to produce. Visit any manufactory of inexpensive goods you like—any place where the things bought by the people are produced—and you will be struck by the utter want of taste displayed by the producers. You remark that "an elegant shape or a pretty design could be sent into the market in large quantities at as small a cost as unshapeliness and ugliness now are. You are always met by this reply—"I make for my market. My wares suit the customers I supply. The retailers would not take a different article if I made it. They stick to the old patterns, because they are what their customers ask for. I make to supply orders." This is true; and we may conclude that all pressure must come from without. Reform must begin with the purchaser. A greater knowledge of art will result in a greater love of art. The wider diffusion of art knowledge, the establishment of Schools of Art, with the education they give, must inevitably lead to this. The only question in the case is one of time.

First, perhaps, we ought to look to our painters and architects to accomplish something more than they have yet done. And we hail with pleasure the course taken by so competent a critic of art as Mr. Poynter. In his discussion of the principles of true art—never varying—and in his comparison of old with new art, he has struck at the causes which lie at the root of the national want of appreciation in art.

"The truth is, that any attempt to rival or surpass the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the past must be made on the same conditions and in the same spirit that animated the producers of those great works. Were science to discover for us the cause of every natural phenomenon that exists, nay, were it to reach the final cause of life itself, the glow of the evening sky would be none the more or less beautiful, nor the grace of a child's movements one whit diminished or increased. These, indeed, are eternal beauties and unchangeable, and they are what the artist has to treat of; and though he may never be able to arrive at the complete expression of them, he can see to the end of them, for they live for ever for his continued contemplation.

"I have no hesitation in saying that art has lost more than it has gained by our modern modes of thought and feeling, and that if it be asked why we cannot put away the traditions of the past, and work in the modern spirit, the answer is that the modern spirit is becoming daily more opposed to the artistic spirit, and is precisely what hampers its expression; that what is good in the art of to-day, is good in the same way, and for the same reasons, as the old is good; that we have no lights on the subject which were not also clear to the old masters, and that where we seem to have struck out a new path, we have only chosen one which they purposely and rightly rejected—where we seem to have discovered a new truth, it proves to be one beside the question.

"Now there are, I think, two causes to be found for the immense difference in the aim and results of our modern work as compared with that of the ancients. I should have said rather that there are two ways in which the modern spirit is opposed to the artistic spirit; and one of these is in a noble direction, and is due to the spread of a philosophy—I might almost call it a religion—which insists on the recognition of certain qualities,

moral and Divine, inherent in ideas or impressions of beauty, which recognition is necessary on the part of the artist to the production of a high form of art. The second, or ignoble way, may be broadly stated as due to the fact that artists, from motives of indolence or interest, have allowed themselves to be led by the opinion of the public, instead of being, as of old, indifferent to it, and themselves leading the way to a better appreciation on the part of the public of the capabilities of art.

"Now, both these causes have, curiously enough, led to the same result—I mean, they have both been instrumental in leading to a prevalent belief that the imitation of nature, or perhaps I should say the record of his impressions of nature, is the aim and purpose of the artist. It will be necessary, then, before going further, that we should inquire in what way and how far a mere imitation of nature may result in a work of art. And in speaking of imitation, I must be understood to use the word in the sense of copying. Fuseli defines the difference between copying and imitation in this way: 'Precision of eye and obedience of hand are the requisites of the former, without the least pretence to choice, what to select, what to reject; whilst choice, directed by judgment or taste, constitutes the essence of imitation, and alone can raise the most dexterous copyist to the noble rank of an artist.' But it seems to me that it is impossible for an artist not to choose what he is going to paint: he may choose stupidly, but a choice of some kind he must make; so with this difference I take his definition of copying as what I mean by imitation.

"This precision of eye and obedience of hand, requisite for the rendering of colour and form, include the whole art of painting, and are found in perfection only in the work of the most highly gifted artists; but they are distinctly only the painter's qualities, and exclude the mental. Moreover, being the qualities which are necessary to his existence as a painter, and without which he is nothing, they take the lowest place among the artistic faculties. But the fact remains, that a mere imitation of nature—what is called realistic painting, though I should be inclined to call it materialistic—the fact remains that this imitative painting may be so admirably done as to become of a high order of merit. It is the essence of

portrait painting; though for a good portrait other qualities are doubtless required. It is the essence also of landscape painting, though for good landscapes other qualities are required; and it is all that is necessary for still-life painting. But it is only the groundwork of ideal art, and is akin to the language by which the poet expresses his thoughts."

Painting, sculpture, and architecture standing first, we look to our national school to reform the existing state of things. But if the walls of the Academy, year after year, hold so little of the ideal in art; if the few artists who strive after what is greatest and best meet with little encouragement from buyers and patrons of art, how can we reasonably expect the producers of wares which might be made artistic and beautiful to do, in their humble sphere, what the painters and sculptors fail to do in theirs? Again, the demand must come from without. It is as unreasonable to expect men who depend for their living upon the sale of their works to paint pictures which they know they are unlikely to find purchasers for, as it is to expect from manufacturers articles, beautiful in form and chaste in design, for which "they have no market."

Mr. Poynter remarked that if "we are to look forward to the more general production of a class of art of that high creative kind which I have dwelt on, and which is at present decidedly in the minority in this land—though I must confess that I think there is a decided move in the right direction, and a desire for something of a more serious kind—we must, I think, in the first place, try not to encumber our minds with ideas, but rely on the cultivation of our perceptive faculties to show us the high beauties that lie beneath the surface of nature; and we shall then get rid of the notion that little pictures of fruit and flowers and landscape are anything more than studies to help us in the execution of better work, or to be done from time to time as mementos of some especially delightful aspect of nature in form or colour; and we must, above all, study the works of the great masters of antiquity. 'Study the great works of the great masters,' says Reynolds, 'for ever. Study nature attentively, but always with those masters in your company; consider them as models which you are to imitate, and at the same

time as rivals with whom you are to contend.'"

It is only too true that "little pictures of fruit and flowers and landscape" are what our painters most usually produce, and that such subjects are what they excel in. But the reason they never rise above these imitations of nature is that their patrons ask no more of them; and the principle is precisely that on which the potter bases his reasons for continuing to make ugly wares, and the calico printer to produce red and yellow handkerchiefs. The market rules both artist and manufacturer.

Mr. Poynter comments on the idea which runs throughout Ruskin's works of the necessity for a right state of moral feeling, not only in the producers, but in a nation or epoch, as essential to the appreciation and production of a noble and beautiful art; and remarks that even if it can be shown that the best art has always arisen out of a pure state of national faith and domestic virtue, it does not follow that those conditions will always produce good art. If the æsthetic qualities be absent, they certainly never will, and he can imagine no condition of national virtue which could cram ideas of beauty into the head of an average Englishman or Scotchman; but as far as regards the artist himself, it appears unquestionable, Mr. Poynter says, that the æsthetic faculties being in two instances equal, there will be no comparison between the art of a man of a pure and noble mind and one of a mean and sordid nature. Indeed, the very highest artistic gifts seem to imply also a noble and healthy moral condition. Michael Angelo was himself one of the most simple and high-minded of men, incapable of any act of meanness; and we should find, he thinks, on examination, that all the truly great artists and poets have been of the same nature.

We should not hesitate for one moment in giving our adhesion to the conclusion arrived at by Mr. Poynter, but we do believe that, even in the present condition of "national virtue," it is quite possible to "cram ideas of beauty into the head of an average Englishman or Scotchman;" nay, into the heads of those much below the average of intelligence. The taste for the beautiful in art and nature is there, surely enough. To a wider cultivation of the intelligence, we look for a wider appreciation of the true and beautiful. The result of such a general ap-

preciation would be the improvement of our national art, whether it is shown in a picture at the Academy, or the commonest piece of furniture in everyday use.

WHAT A FLOWER DID FOR ME.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—I.

MANY years ago, when I was about one and twenty, I happened to take it into my head to start on a walking tour. Young and strong, with a tolerably well filled purse, and an intense appreciation of lovely scenery, a tour on foot, with satchel on back, through some picturesque and remote part of the country, seemed to my ardent imagination the height of human happiness, and my project was no sooner formed than I hastened to put it into execution.

I chose South Devon, that region of charming lanes, where the honeysuckle and wild rose are ever peeping out at the traveller through the luxuriant growth of the hedges; that region of black-eyed, cherry-cheeked lasses, with their broad Devonshire dialect; and last, but not least, that very paradise for strawberries and cream, in bright and sultry July.

Here then, accordingly, in one of the beautiful lanes already mentioned, I found myself on a sweet July day, in the summer of 18—. Never mind the exact date—say, about ten years ago.

Strolling leisurely along, in the cool shade made by the boughs of the oak and elm interlacing overhead, listening to the clear “kink-kink” of the merry chaffinch, and the rich melody of the blackcap, with a perfect harvest of bloom on either side, and the most delicious perfumes scenting the clear air—strolling along thus, I felt a sense of complete luxurious enjoyment, mingled with an almost sacred calm of spirit, to which hitherto—for my youth had been chiefly passed in towns—I had been a stranger.

I remember, it was haymaking time, and the merry voices of the mowers were borne to me on the light summer breeze, mingled with the odour than which none on earth is sweeter, that of newly-mown hay.

Ever and anon, by pushing aside the stems of the blackberry and wild rose, and mounting up into the hedge, I got a glimpse of the pleasant hay fields, with the neatly made cocks piled in regular array, and the bands of men and maidens tossing the rest lightly into the air, when the feathery

particles, light as gossamer, floated quietly away.

“There is no place, after all, like an English hay field,” I thought, as I continued my journey. “There is something unique in its pleasures and associations—something about them that make hay fields one of the sweetest and purest charms of English country life in summer time;” and then I speculated on the various matches that had probably been made up in these scenes, when rustic youth and maiden meet at the glowing season of love. For there is love everywhere then; it nestles coily in the folds of the bashful flower; it permeates the fresh, scented atmosphere; it hangs high in the clear blue sky, and haunts the deep umbrageous dell, where the voices of the happy birds mingle with the music of the “golden-gravelled” brook. And not only in these instances, but everywhere in this bright time, is the love of the all-bounteous Creator manifested for the denizens of this fair world. And should not all these external tokens of a great and glorious love kindle the bright flame in human breasts, both towards each other and the munificent giver of all? Moralizing thus, I heard the welcome gurgle of a brook; and following the bend of the lane, I found my progress arrested by a stream, which sparkled merrily across the road.

Glancing at the opening in the hedge through which the brook issued, I could trace its upward course for some short distance, and could see that its banks were very beautiful. On one side was a hedge perfectly aglow with many-coloured flowers; but the other bank was nearly on a level with the margin of the meadow, and thickly studded with forget-me-nots, marsh marigolds, and exquisite ferns. I could see the timid trout darting like an arrow through the clear water; and once the lovely kingfisher flashed past me like a blue meteor, and shot up the stream. Though the day was now fast drawing to a close, and I was somewhat wearied with a tramp of some dozen miles or so, I could not resist the temptation of exploring this pretty rivulet for a short distance; and, accordingly, after scrambling through the hedge, I found myself on its brink. After following its windings through two or three fields, I came to a spot which was indeed welcome to a traveller wearied and footsore as I was. Some noble oak trees grew here close to the brook, under whose shade the grass was

long and soft; so I flung myself down on this delicious bed, and prepared to dream away an hour or so. The stream sang merrily at my feet, making a fairy-like lullaby; whilst the drowsy hum of the golden-belted bees, amid the clover and wild roses by my side, lent their aid in steeping my senses in a delightful drowsiness—a kind of half-sleep, when the will seemed to be dormant, and to have lost its power to control the unruly and erratic flights of the fancy, which accordingly soared hither and thither at its pleasure.

Looking dreamily into the mass of bloom on the hedge across the brook, my eye fell on a bell-shaped flower of a delicate bluish hue—an exquisitely beautiful tint or shade, such as I had never before seen. It was not violet, for it was far too light; it had more the hue of the sapphire, or the sky above me, than anything else. I was no botanist, so I was quite at a loss as to the name of this floral gem—which, however, seemed to have a strange fascination for me, an unaccountable charm. As I lay there, half buried in the long soft grass, in the sweet summer twilight, weaving my dreamy undefined thoughts into all kinds of wild, fantastic shapes, that blue flower, shining on in softened beauty, seemed gradually to link itself with my future destiny. I could see no more like it, and I felt it would be nothing less than sacrilege to tear that lovely denizen of the hedge from its fair dwelling-place, and doom it to perpetual captivity between the leaves of some trashy album. So I determined to leave it in peace; and rousing myself from my reverie with some effort, I dismissed my floral musings from my mind at once, and felt half ashamed of myself for having indulged even for half an hour in such absurd imaginings.

I walked briskly home in the deepening twilight to my comfortable inn; and after doing ample justice to the trout, and strawberries and cream, which my worthy hostess had prepared for me, I gladly sought my little bed, with its white dimity curtains and lavender-scented pillows, and was soon buried in a profound slumber.

That blue flower haunted my dreams, however, though in a misty, indistinct manner; and by the next morning it had nearly escaped my recollection. About the middle of that day, a telegram called me to town at once, on urgent business; so I reluctantly bade adieu to my comfortable quarters and kind

landlady, and in an hour or two afterwards I found myself ensconced in a railway carriage, whirling towards London at the rate of forty miles an hour.

I need not advert to the nature of the business that called me away so suddenly, nor need I say a word about my life for the subsequent twelve months, which were passed in the din and noise of the mighty city.

The year passed uneventfully enough: the usual routine of London life, of which I got heartily sick by the time July came round again, when I purposed making another and more extensive walking tour. But on the third of the month I received a note from a fast friend and former schoolfellow of mine—Bob Crawford, the son of a gentleman who had a fine place in South Devon. Bob had just returned home from his travels; for the last four or five years he had been wandering over the world—now following Livingstone's track in the burning deserts of Africa—now exploring the mysteries of Salt Lake City, and "interviewing" Brigham Young. Then his friends heard of him from the East, shooting elephants in Ceylon, and exploring the teak forests of Borneo. One of his latest exploits was dancing the polka with a fair daughter of the King of the Fiji Islands. This erratic spirit, tired at length of his wanderings, had just come home, after an absence of five years, strong (so I had heard), bearded like the pard, and brimful of travellers' tales. His note contained a pressing invitation for me to pay a visit to Charwood Grange, where he averred I might either spend my days fishing in the lovely meres, in exploring the noble woods, or in flirting with his pretty sisters, if that was more to my taste. I had not seen Bob since his return, and I readily fell in with his plans; so I lost no time in sending a warm note, thanking him for the invitation, and began my preparations for the journey.

It was a lovely July evening in the summer of 18—that I found myself seated in a carriage by the side of my old schoolfellow, bowling smoothly along a majestic avenue of fir and larch towards Charwood Grange, the chimneys of which I could dimly descry, ever and anon, through openings in the trees.

The avenue was long, so I had ample time for a *tête-à-tête* with my old friend, who had driven to the station himself, expressly to welcome me. What a pleasant drive that was! I thought Bob wonderfully improved

in every way, although he had altogether a foreign air and manner, and had evidently a great contempt for many of the conventionalities of English social life.

"My dear Alwyne," said he, as he puffed away at a huge cigar, "my countrymen mean well, I know; but their cold reserve and habitual stickling for all the proprieties of so-called etiquette spoil them completely. Can anything be more absurd than a couple of Englishmen playing dummy to each other over a coffee-room table when they meet abroad, and that, perhaps, for the whole evening? Each is too proud to speak first, and thus a whole evening of pleasant chit-chat and social intercourse is lost, merely through a ridiculous and unmeaning pride!"

I could not deny the justice and truth of these remarks; although, being naturally shy and reserved myself, and utterly destitute of the stock of chat and small talk for all occasions that belonged to my friend, they were perhaps not so palatable to me as they would otherwise have been. But I felt at heart that many of us untravelled Britons are extremely narrow and insular in our ideas; and gazing at the lithe, stalwart frame of my friend, with his handsome sunburnt features, and vivacious yet natural manners, I could not help contrasting him with some of our poor limp English dandies, with their numerous affectations and artificial manners—decidedly, I fear, to their disadvantage. Reflecting thus, and listening to the lively sallies of my companion, the carriage made a sudden turn to the right, and leaving the avenue, we emerged on a spacious gravel walk cut through the centre of a beautiful lawn, and the quaint old pile stood immediately before us, its numerous vanes and pinnacles red with the rays of the setting sun. I had been at this place once only in my early boyhood, about fifteen years before, and the impression it made on me then had never been wholly erased from my memory. It had often lingered in my dreams since, this fair and stately home of my friend; but it never looked half so beautiful there as it did in reality on this calm July night. Picture to yourself, gentle reader, a grand old pile, half Elizabethan, half Gothic, faced by an extensive lawn, blooming with the choicest flowers, that sloped gently down to a broad mere, with the lordly swan upon its bosom. On the other side of this mere, a fine park, dotted with noble elm and oak, stretched

away as far as the eye could reach, bounded in the far distance by the noble woods of the estate.

Behind the mansion were extensive pasture fields and kitchen gardens, and beyond these a picturesque, irregular country, with a smiling village, and gray old church tower in its midst; the whole backed by a lofty range of purple hills.

Picture this scene, fair reader, lit with the soft rays of the dying sun, and you have before you Charwood Grange as I beheld it on that sultry July evening, as we drove up the gravel walk towards the principal entrance.

BARON STOCKMAR.

THE long-promised translation from the German of the memoirs of Baron Stockmar comes to us in two tolerably thick volumes. The editor is Professor Max Müller, and we have an editor's preface and an author's preface, as well as a biographical sketch of the late Baron's career, before we come to the first chapter of these interesting memoirs.* Professor Max Müller confesses that his "personal acquaintance with the late Baron Stockmar was but slight."

"I met him," he says, "now and then in Bunsen's house; and I saw him once more in his own house at Coburg, after he had withdrawn from active life." His son, the Baron E. Von Stockmar, to whom we are indebted for the memoirs, stood, of course, in a different position. He has published such papers of his father's as the late Baron intended for the public eye. He says, in his (the author's) preface, "There is no unity in the composition of the book;" and he regards the various chapters as "contributions to the political history of the times." Of the value of these contributions there can be no doubt. The author excepts from this category "the first three chapters, which concern the English Royal family and the Court at Claremont." But, to the general reader, these first chapters, and such other portions of the book as give an insight into the inner life of the Court, and describe, from personal observation, scenes in which the prominent members of our Royal family,

* Memoirs of Baron Stockmar. By his Son, Baron E. Von Stockmar. Translated from the German, by G. A. M. Edited by F. Max Müller. London: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1872.

and the statesmen of a generation ago, are the actors, possess by far the greatest interest. Christian Friedrich Stockmar was born at Coburg in 1787, and died there July 9, 1863, before the close of his seventy-sixth year. Possessed of very remarkable qualities, he owed his opportunities to the advancement of the Princes of Coburg. He was bred to the practice of physic; and in 1815, accompanied the Saxon Ducal regiment into Alsace; "whence he returned to Coburg, and resumed his duties as town and country physician." Prince Leopold, of Coburg, had taken a fancy to him; and when the Prince's marriage with the Princess Charlotte was arranged, Stockmar was appointed physician in ordinary to the Prince.

He arrived at Dover on the 29th March, 1816, and proceeded at once to his post; and as long as his royal master lived, Stockmar was ever to him the best of servants, counsellors, and friends. Prince Leopold was at Brighton when Stockmar reached England. His Highness's marriage with the Princess Charlotte took place on May 2nd. After spending a week at Oatlands, the Duke of York's residence, the royal couple returned to London in the season, and settled at Camelford House. Stockmar now first made the acquaintance of the Court circle. Stockmar saw the Princess first at Oatlands, May 5, 1816. He says:—

"Baron Hardenbroeck was going into the breakfast-room. I followed him. He signed me with his hand to stay behind; but she had already seen me and I her.

"Aha, docteur," she said, 'entrez.'

"She was handsomer than I had expected, with most peculiar manners; her hands generally folded behind her, her body always pushed forward, never standing quiet, from time to time stamping her foot, laughing a great deal, and talking still more. I was examined from head to foot, without, however, losing my countenance. My first impression was not favourable. In the evening she pleased me more. Her dress was simple, and in good taste."

It is in these little sketches of the life of the great people among whom he moved that the Baron excels. These peeps at the inner life of the Court, written by an intelligent, and on the whole a good-natured, witness, are by far the most interesting parts of the book. The Greek candidature of Prince Leopold; Belgian and German poli-

tics of the period; the squabbles about continuing to pay the King of the Belgians his annuity after his elevation to the throne of that nation, and so forth, are topics for which the general reader will not care much. But portraits from the life of our own Royal family, of the Duke of Wellington, and other statesmen and courtiers of the time, painted by the brush of this lively and accomplished physician, friend, and confidant of a great Prince and a great man, are of very fresh interest.

Stockmar seems to have had a fascination for the noses of his distinguished acquaintances.

Colonel Addenbrooke, Equerry to the Princess Charlotte, was "a man of sixty-three; a tall, strong, and, for an Englishman of his age, a very active old bachelor, with snow-white hair and a tremendous nose." Poor old gentleman. They little thought of the "chiel amang them takin' notes"—a doctor too. The old colonel's "weak point, I see," is "a weak stomach, into which he carefully crams a mass of the most incongruous things, and then complains the next day of fearful headaches!"

The Duke of Wellington is described in 1816 as—"Middle height, neither stout nor thin, erect figure, not stiff, not very lively. Black hair, simply cut, strongly mixed with gray; not a very high forehead, immense hawk's nose, tightly-compressed lips, strong, massive under-jaw."

Lord Anglesea (the general) had, according to the Baron—"A wild, martial face, high forehead, with a large hawk's nose;" but withal "great ease of manners."

Others of the Court circle have blunt noses, thin, pointed noses, and striking noses of all sorts; but the chief interest of the picture is centred in the Royal group.

The consort of good old George III. is "small and crooked, with a true mulatto face."

The Regent: "Very stout, though of a fine figure; distinguished manners. He ate a good deal at dinner. His brown scratch wig not particularly becoming."

Duke of York: "Tall, with immense *embonpoint*, and not proportionately strong legs." This is a charming touch of nature: "He holds himself in such a way that one is always afraid he will tumble over backwards. Very bald. One can see that eating, drinking, and sensual pleasure are everything to him."

His Royal Highness's wife, the Duchess of York, is "a little animated woman, talks immensely, and laughs still more. No beauty; mouth and teeth bad."

Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV.): "The smallest and least good-looking of the brothers; decidedly like his mother; as talkative as the rest."

The virtue in the Baron's eyes that attached to the father of her present Most Gracious Majesty was his Royal Highness of Kent's quietness.

He was "as bald as any one can be. The quietest of all the Dukes I have seen."

Duke of Cumberland (afterwards King Ernest Augustus of Hanover) is a "tall, powerful man, with a hideous face; can't see two inches before him; an eye turned quite out of its place." The natural comment on such criticism of the high and mighty among men is, that it is very brief, very funny, and very rude.

The Duke of Cambridge, youngest son of George III., struck Stockmar as being "a good-looking man, with a blonde wig." But he talked so fast and so much as to "carry off the palm in the family art."

The last flower in this royal bouquet is his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, of whom we have this piquant little sketch: "Prominent, meaningless eyes; a very unpleasant face, with an animal expression; large and stout, but with weak, helpless legs. He wears a neckcloth thicker than his head."

That the Baron's son's book will be read by many royal personages, we have no doubt. Such candid criticism rarely reaches their ears. It is sure to make them laugh. But it should suggest to them the propriety of appointing people about their persons who don't write clever sketches, or of instituting a new office at Court, that of over-looker of such sketches when written.

It must be a very terrible knowledge to a Prince with "a hawk's nose," "a hideous face," or "weak, helpless legs," or "a neckcloth thicker than his head," to be cognisant of the presence at the dinner table of a man who is putting these little peculiarities of natural construction into ink for the benefit of a not very distant posterity. What a Princess ought to do to a gentleman in waiting who is silyly describing her high mightiness as "small and crooked, with a true mulatto face," or as "no beauty, with bad teeth," we leave it to ladies generally to say.

We have said enough to show that the "Memoirs of Baron Stockmar" is an amusing book. It will occur to most readers that it is a little unfair, after all. For while we thank the shade of the industrious writer for his graphic impressions of other people, we can only acknowledge his son's filial piety in printing in the "Memoirs" none but the most flattering opinions expressed by others of his father. What these royal and distinguished individuals honestly thought of Christian Friedrich Baron Von Stockmar would doubtless form a curious rider to what the "confidential friend" of the late King of the Belgians thought of them.

SKETCHES OF IRISH LIFE.—V.

A SHOOTING EXPLOIT.

[The scene of this sketch is laid in the county Antrim, Ireland.]

CHATTING and joking on the way, we soon found ourselves at the Glebe Bog, and there began a discussion as to the best course of hunting it over. The bog was a very extensive one, being almost half a mile long by about a quarter broad. It had at one time been brought into requisition as a turf moss, and therefore abounded with ridges, ruts, quagmires, &c., over which it required considerable care and experience to travel. Having determined on our course of action, which was to spread and cross over the bog against the wind, we descended the rushy hill and put the dogs into it forthwith.

Bill and I were in the middle, Tam about two hundred yards to his right, and the scholar about the same distance to his left.

We had certainly not got fifty yards into the bog—each one keeping a strict look-out for himself—when the silence was suddenly broken by the loud report of the teacher's gun, followed by a hurried flapping of wings, and a loud quacking of ducks.

Looking over we saw our friend, his gun still smoking, standing in mute affright, while a squadron of tame ducks were flying helter-skelter in all directions, and raising noise enough to shame a field of corn crakes. This was not all. Upon the ground, at some distance from him, a large drake was fluttering over the ground, wing broken, and vigorously adding his cry of murder to the general voice. We, of course, hastened to learn the meaning of this phenomenon,

and were met by our much alarmed friend with—

"My goodness, friends! I have shot a tame drake in mistake for a wild one. He was swimming about in a pool over there, and I didn't observe any of them but himself. What shall we do, at all?"

"Howl yer tongue, man!—make no noise about it. There's room enough fur him in the bag, if they haven't seen it from thou wee house on the hill. Sow! it's not the first time I hiv bagged a duck when a wus hard up."

We proceeded, therefore, to the spot where the drake lay, and, after a very great deal of slipping and falling in scrambling about after him in vain, at length captured him.

But judge of our surprise when, on having made him secure, we discovered another duck lying quite dead among the sedges. Imagine our astonishment, too, when yet another duck, with a wild quack, quack, quack, quack, came flapping and fluttering from under a bank in a frantic endeavour to fly. We began to look about us in a state of bewilderment, and to think that we really did not know the extent of the damage done.

"For mercy's sake, gentlemen, what will we do?" at length said our learned friend, now thoroughly frightened. "This is really a most serious affair. I think it's best for us to decamp with all possible—oh, good heavens! yonder's a man coming over the dyke to us. What *will* we do or say? I haven't money to pay for them. I have only a shilling and fourpence in my pocket. Do suggest something, Mr. Hardy."

"Jist howl yer gab now, a minute," said Tam, "an' I'll settle the whole affair. Jist wait there a bit, all o' yer, till I go forrit to the man, and ye'll see if I don't make it all right."

Tam accordingly put on his sweetest smile, and advanced towards the approaching man.

Before the latter had time to speak, he accosted him with—

"That's a fine day, sir! The top o' the mornin' to ye. 'Am sorry the ducks tuck the shootin' so ill. A suppose they're not much used to the crack o' the gun. 'Deed, if we had knowed they were so near, we wudn't a shot over them. But 'am sure ye'll excuse us this time."

The man had obviously been attracted only by the unusual alarm the ducks had made,

and seemed, therefore, perfectly satisfied when Tam's explanation and apology made known to him that his fowl had been merely frightened a little.

"Oh, it's all right, mister," was his reply—"it's all right. I was jist coming over to see if yez had got whativer ye shot at."

"Oh, 'deed, an' we didn't," rejoined Tam; feeling fearful lest the man should come over towards us, and see the maimed duck making another attempt at flight.

"Didn't ye, throth?" said the man again; "well, that's worse, an' more iv it. May be I cud raise yez something good—a wild goose—if ye jist come with me a bit. She sits jist a wee bit over here generally, in an awl puddle-hole, where nobody wud think o' lookin'."

Now, this was precisely what Tam did not want. He was in momentary fear of the duck making another squabble, even as it was; and to walk over to the very spot where it lay, which the man, for the purpose of speaking to us, would certainly have done, he considered rather too great a risk to be run with safety.

"D'ye tell me there's a wile goose here?" said he, as a thought struck him. "An' it's over in that direction, is it? Well, now, if it's all the same to you, we'll jist come that road as we come back. 'Am obleeged to ye for offerin' to raise her fur us; but may be ye'll be about as we come this road again."

"Well, I will, in coorse," was the rejoinder; "but don't ye think ye'll raise her wi' the shootin'? It's jist a wee bit over there where she is."

"Is it you that lives in thon cottage?" asked Tam, in reply, as a new idea suddenly entered his mind.

"Yis."

"Well, I tell ye what—a think we *will* throuble ye to raise her fur us. But before ye come with us, a'll jist trouble ye to git us a wee cupful of cold water till we give ye a wee dhrop of somethin' good. Billy, come 'ere wi' that rattley."

The man smiled benignly.

"Aw naw, aw—niver min' me, aw thank ye—niver heed."

"Go now an' git us the wather, to ye taste a dhrop iv good whisky."

"Aw it's too much, it's—well, a suppose a must git ye the wather, any way!"

And the man proceeded with despatch towards the cottage.

No sooner was his back well turned than

Tam began to look about eagerly, at the same time wondering aloud—

"Where the devil's that duck stickin'?"

Then began a search, which every moment became more exciting.

The duck, wherever it was "stickin'," was wise enough to keep quiet, and when the man was within a few yards of his own door, we were as ignorant as ever as to its whereabouts. Of course, the danger was that he might return ere we had discovered it, and that it might then take a notion to make its presence known with its previous earnestness. It was easy for us to retreat some distance from the place; but a few flaps and quacks like the others, we knew, would soon attract the owner, though he had been a furlong from the scene. We were, therefore, exceedingly anxious to see it safe and snug in William's wallet before his return.

"Where the devil's that thing, any way?" at length exclaimed Bill, after we had blundered about for two or three minutes in vain.

"Oh, by the powers we're done! thonder's the man comin'!" ejaculated Tam, giving up the search in despair.

"Let us quit the place—let us quit the place altogether at once," said the pedagogue, hurriedly.

Just at this instant we heard, right behind us, a slight movement and a preliminary quack. Almost simultaneous with the quack was this exclamation of Bill's—

"Catch it—grab it—choke it!"

These mandates, however, were not so easily obeyed. If we showed any commotion the man could not fail to observe it; and the duck was not to be had for the lifting. But Tam, luckily, settled our difficulty. Pulling the ramrod from his gun, he made a race at the unfortunate fowl; and just when it had given forth the first two of what doubtless would have been a series of loud quacks, put it out of pain for ever.

"Shove it in here—shove it in, quick—quick, quick!" whispered Bill, as it was hastily thrust into the wallet.

As the man approached, we saw that he had not observed our movements.

Bill gave him the "dhrop of somethin' good," and he seemed highly pleased with it and us.

I noticed that while he was drinking it the visage of the schoolmaster was rueful. He watched him till he brought the cup from his mouth with a smack of the lips, and a pleased grin; and then he turned woefully

away, with an expression that seemed to say "There's nearly a glass gone."

"Ha, wheugh! that's as good a dhrop iv whisky as iver"—a slight cough—"as iver went in my mouth. It's the rale stuff, that. Now, if yiz'll jist come over this way a bit, we'll see if we can raise that goose."

The goose, however, we were unable to raise, so, after half an hour's hunting for it, we gave up all thoughts of ever making its acquaintance, and left our friend with the purpose of penetrating farther into the bog.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Tam, when the man was out of earshot. "We wheedled that chap about right, didn't we? Two ducks an' a drake for about a good half un o' whisky."

"Ay, well, he's able enough to afford it. That's a son o' owl stumpy Brown's, o' the Cair Moss—brother o' big Billy's, yer know. You know him, Tam, I'm sure."

"Naw! that's not a son o' Stumpy Brown's, shurely."

"Ay, 'deed it is—jist a son o' Stumpy's."

"Sowl, an' divil pity him fur his ducks, if that's who the boy is. They're a hard pack o' scoundhrels, ivery one o' them."

It was noticeable that, as we trudged along, the schoolmaster kept very convenient to Bill, and looked exceedingly thoughtful.

"Really, gentlemen," he at length ventured, in his most studious manner, "really, gentlemen, that little affair has quite upset my nervous system."

As he spoke, he cast a furtive glance at that particular part of William's coat under which the flask hung.

"A'll warrant wud it," was Bill's innocent reply.

"Yes, indeed, quite upset me—quite upset," continued he, looking a little disappointed. "In fact, I am afraid I'll have to—a—to—a—"—a shudder—"in sooth, I doubt I have caught a cold, standing about there so long."

Still Bill did not see, or did not want to see, his drift.

"My dear friend, Mr. Hardy," he said at length, after some moments' silence, "I know you will excuse me when I say that—that, in fact, I think I'll have to trouble you for just a thimbleful of that whisky. You see, the physical capabilities of—"

"Sartinly, sartinly, Mr. Coodle," said Bill, interrupting him, and pouring him out some

liquor into the zinc socket of the flask made for that purpose.

This having been duly put away, we at once separated, and began zealously to look after our shooting.

We had gone but a very short distance after Mr. Coodle's disposal of the whisky, when both the dogs set steadily at different places. Tam was approaching the nearest dog with all haste, when suddenly four snipe sprang before him, and as the crack, crack of his pair of barrels were heard, two of them made it their business to descend to earth.

No sooner was his second barrel fired, than there sprang, as it seemed, from every place around us a perfect cloud of snipe, screeching and screaming, like so many sparrows affected with influenza. For a second we stood in inert astonishment; and immediately after I made the important discovery that I had fired both my barrels. Bill was still aiming, and the guardian of the young was alternately cocking and pulling the trigger of his gun in a most frantic manner, without any other effect than the harmless click of the hammer falling upon the nipple. Crack at last went the "crow-bar" once more, and no less than three of the snipe gave up the idea of proceeding any farther. Flap, flap, flap—quack, quack, quack, quack, were the sounds that next greeted our ears, as a large wild drake rose out of a drain a short way ahead, just when we had discharged our pieces.

"Oh, Mother o' Moses! what's this?" exclaimed Bill, with a countenance full of remorse and yearning, as he gazed wistfully after the departing wild-fowl.

"Aw, holy tarnal!" followed up Thomas, in something more than brotherly condolence, as he also looked in sad despair after the flying drake.

"I say, gentlemen, what in the world can be the matter with this gun of mine?" said the schoolmaster. "I had two snipe beautifully covered—in fact, I couldn't have failed to hit them both—and not a bit of her would go off. I never saw her missing fire before."

Having collected our birds, Bill took the pedagogue's gun into his hand to examine it. The cause of it not going off was at once apparent.

"It was only a wee taste o' powder, an' a wee taste o' shot, an' a cap she wanted,"

said he, smiling, as he handed the weapon back to its owner.

"What! You do not mean—you do not insinuate that—that——"

"That ye hiv forgot to load her, that's all," added Bill, grinning ethereally.

"Good gracious! is it possible? And I have been pulling at the trigger for the past two minutes, in utter ignorance of the cause of her not going off. Dear me, how very extraordinary—how mysterious! Somehow I never thought of examining the nipple."

"Well, ye'll bether put a charge in her now," said Bill, as he brought his wonted complement of powder out of his pocket in his fist. During this conversation, Tam had been gazing earnestly after the retreating drake. All at once he ceased gazing, and began to load his gun hurriedly, at the same time commanding us to follow his example with similar celerity.

"Load—bad luck to ye, load, ye devils, ye; the dhrake's down on the other side o' the bog," was the phraseology in which he expressed his benevolent advice.

"Naw!" ejaculated Bill, looking across at his brother. "Ay, in throth? I cud take ye to within ten yards o' where he is."

Here there was a minute's silence, in which nothing was heard but the hasty ramming home of the charges, the tearing of paper, and the clicking of hammers.

"Naw, boys, we'll jist go straight across the bog, an' if anything rises, we'll fire, till we get within a couple o' hundhred yards or so o' the dhrake. Won't that——"

"O, O, O! thonder, boys, thonder," interrupted Bill, cocking his gun and unconsciously stooping a little; "thonder, boys, thonder's a stan' from the owl dog—wheest—wo—thonder's the young un stan'in' too—wo, good dogs—gently—a'll howl ye it's widgin, or teal, or somethin'."

Cautionously we approached the setters, with expectant eye and bated breath.

"Go up, good dogs, go on; well——"

The reason of this last slip of the tongue from William was the fact that, in the height of our suspense and expectation, up rose, not a widgeon or a teal, but what was afterwards rightly described by the schoolmaster as a jack-snipe in a state of adolescence, and about the dimensions of an adult tom-tit.

"That's what I call a sell," said Tam, calling up the dogs, and resuming his way, in the latter of which we followed his example.

"Aw, well, we can't grummel now; we're doin' bravely," replied Bill; "but, man, isn't it crule slappy here? Divil the bit but I'm wet-shod."

"Ah, sloppy it is, indeed," said the sage and scholar; "and what we should have done without that flask of spirits you, my dear Mr. Hardy, were thoughtful enough to bring with you, I am at a loss to conjecture. Such excellent spirits, too; 'pon my word, Mr. Hardy, I shall not soon forget your goodness."

"Oh, it's all right, Misther Coodle, ye hiv nothin' to thank me fur. We'll hiv another pull at it whenever we get this dhrake."

"Dear me, such exceeding kindness," soliloquized the pedagogue, ruminatively.

"Look out, Bill, thonder's the owl dog workin' again—wo, wo!—ha! Bad luck to him, did iver ye see the like o' that? Watch it now; watch where it goes—it's a teal. A niver saw that owl dog doin' that before; but he's with the win', ye see—that's how he missed it."

"Man a man, that's a rascally pity," said Bill, turning away as the teal which the old dog had sprung became a speck on the horizon, and then disappeared entirely out of vision. "A don't like to see—tarnal, what's this now? Down, dogs, down," continued he, as the dogs set steadily once more, and we hastened up to them.

Scarcely had we got alongside with these quadrupeds, when all at once up rose seven widgeon in great alarm, and looking specially desirous of increasing the distance between us and them in as short a space of time as was feasible.

As usual, the successor of Plato fired first, and it was noticeable that his gun hissed slightly as it went off.

This time I had determined to be more deliberate; and accordingly, after suffering a good deal of inconvenience, caused by the tendency of my fowling-piece to point at everything but the bird at which I aimed, I slowly sighted one of the largest of the widgeon, pulled the trigger, and had the satisfaction of seeing it come tumbling down. The worst of it was, I never remembered till I heard the crack, crack of Tam's gun, and saw two more birds fall, that I had a second barrel at my command. Bill's shot followed immediately, but this time with less effect, only one bird descending at his hand.

"Well, boys, this bates soup-suppin', or anythin' iv the broth kin'. But what—what's the matter?" exclaimed Tam, the last interrogation being evoked by the somewhat singular manœuvres of the school-master, who was in one of those contortions peculiar to schoolboys after having received "pandies." Doubling himself up, with one hand in his pocket, and drawing in his breath between his clenched teeth, as if in great pain—

"Oh, good gracious! dear me—my stars, what's this? Well, many a—oh!—many a pain I suffered, but"—a bend and grin—"but the like of this I never"—another bend—"never suffered."

"Why, what's the matter, Misther Coodle?" inquired Bill. "What has come over ye?"

"Oh, it's—it's—it's—dear me, such excruciating pain! It's—it's—curse the thing, this is abominable—it's—my goodness, is it never going to go away? It's—well, the like of this—it's the gun—the nipple—the—perhaps you would just put about three drops of whisky on that finger, I think it might help to deaden the pain. The like of that I never felt in all the course of my experience."

The mention of the nipple, coupled with the hissing sound his gun had made when fired, at once indicated to us what had occurred. The scorched appearance, too, of the side of his hand was a still stronger index. The "Queen Anne" had given him the benefit of a small share of her powder charge, through the medium of the wide-holed nipple.

Bill rubbed a little whisky on the charred parts, and soon the pain went entirely away—not, however, I should mention, until a small quantity of the liquor had been applied internally also, when the effect was miraculous.

Once more, then, we gathered our birds, which now entirely filled William's wallet, and having loaded our guns, proceeded in a direct line towards the spot where the drake was supposed to have alighted. If ever an adverse star hung over a poor mortal, assuredly one of the first magnitude hung over the pedagogue that day. We had got perhaps half-way, and were crossing a rather precarious part of the morass, when the syren voice of that gentleman was heard behind us, to the following tune—

"Hi! hold on! murder! help! pull me out—pull me out—I'm sinking!"

Looking round, we saw a sight that made us convulse ourselves with laughter, despite the difficulty and danger of our friend's situation.

There was the disciple of knowledge, his face the picture of alarm, gradually and steadily sinking out of human view, while he emphatically testified his disapprobation of such untimely disappearance from earth by wildly waving his gun and one arm about his head, and shouting at us for heaven's sake to pull him out; occasionally diversifying the appeal by a reminder of his matrimonial responsibility, an enumeration of his progeny—thirteen and the baby—and a declaration of his unfitness to make the threatened change. He was now nearly up to the waist, and the more he struggled the more rapidly did he descend.

To pull him out was a task not so easily accomplished, considering that he was right in the middle of a quagmire, round which there was no standing-point near enough to lend him any assistance; while if we allowed him to continue descending, there was a positive certainty that in about three or four minutes a chimney-pot hat would have been all the visible remains of our very dear companion and acquaintance, Mr. Coodle.

"For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, pull"—a gasp—"pull me out. *Don't* let me go out of the world in this way. Pull me out—for heaven's sake pull me out! Think of my"—another gasp—"Hardy, catch me, hold me—sa—"—as he sank almost to the armpits, his entreaties changed into long gasps and frantic strugglings, and our good friend was on a fair way of waving an affectionate adieu to earth, and quitting its surface for ever. And though, as Bill said, the manner of his exodus and direction taken by him were ominously against him, perchance the change—well, who knows?

Fate had destined that it should be otherwise. It so happened that Bill, just in the nick of time, and as he was about to jump in and pull out the schoolmaster at all risks, observed an old sallow branch lying half immersed in water. Quickly obtaining possession of this, he thrust it out towards the unfortunate pedagogue, who was now just beginning the bubbling and spluttering process; and that gentleman having taken a hold, which he did not require much persuasion to do, pulled firmly and long. After a good deal of dragging and haul-

ing, he got most of him above the surface; but—oh, fluctuating fortune!—while in this position the sallow branch broke near the top, and down he came on his face and hands, with a loud slap, like the sound made by the collision of two flat boards. His position, however, being now horizontal, was not dangerous; and with our united aid, we at length managed to get him once more on *terra firma*.

"A drop of—drop of spirits—Mr.—Hardy," said he, gasping and panting violently; adding, "I'll—pay—pay you for—for all this a—again."

Bill applied the mouth of the flask to his lips, and poured in about a glass of the raw material. In less than two minutes after, Richard, as far as circumstances would permit, was himself again—only that he was a little dirty.

When he had begun to feel better, he commenced making magnanimous endeavours to walk; but, oh, those endeavours! Somehow, he could not prevail on himself to bend his knee-joints, and the longer he stood the more immovable he became.

Friend reader, have you ever been necessitated to walk some distance on a winter day in a saturated pair of nether-garments? If you have, you will at once understand Mr. Coodle's aversion to locomotion.

"I'll have to go over to"—a shiver—"my cousin's over here, and get a change of clothes at"—another shiver—"once."

He was standing, with his face as if it had been wiped over with a bluebag, raising one foot and then another, like a restless horse.

"Jist so," repeated Bill—"that's the very best thing ye can do; an' if ye don't be more than half an hour or so, ye'll fin' us here when ye come back. Now, shake off the cow'l, an' make a charge at once."

Accordingly—instigated, I am inclined to believe, as much by John Barleycorn as by the necessity—he made the charge, and proceeded as fast as possible towards the house of his cousin—about a quarter of a mile distant.

We watched him picking his way over the morass, which he did with the greatest possible care; and it was not until he disappeared over a dyke on the hillside that we turned to see after the drake.

"That owl fella's dangerous to be out with," was Tam's first remark, as we trudged on; "he might drown himself, or shoot

himself, or do some devil's thing iv that kin', and git us into a scrape."

"Oh, 'deed might he," said Bill, "an' that owl' gun'll blow the head off him some day."

"Man, isn't he mortal fond of the whisky!" continued Tam. "Bad luck to me, but he cud swally it in quarts."

"He cud, in sowl; that last glass iv raw stuff a give him niver put a grin on his face. He can dhrink it like milk."

TABLE TALK.

THE Bishop of Manchester has made a very sensible suggestion to some of the policemen under his episcopal jurisdiction. He addressed a meeting of the force, and among other things he remarked that he was "not a stiff-starched bishop," and proceeded to say that—"He understood there was a temptation placed in the way of policemen to acquire a reputation for sagacity by leading on offenders into a trap, as he might say. He did not mean to say that any of his hearers had yielded to the temptation to do anything of the kind. But he asked policemen to try to prevent, instead of merely detecting, crime. They must see many young lads and lasses of fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen years of age, who were going to the bad; and was it not worth while for policemen to say a word, or do something in a friendly manner, to hinder these lads and lasses from following their evil course? If a policeman managed to rescue a boy or a girl from crime—and he, the bishop, was sure the police sometimes had chances of doing so—he would have done something that ought to give him satisfaction for the whole of his life, and something much more blessed than the apprehension of a confirmed criminal." If the policemen will only take this wise hint of the bishop's, what a field there is for their exertions. They have opportunities such as present themselves to few other people of saying the word in time to "young lads and lasses" going, but not yet gone, "to the bad." Is it too much to expect that the policemen of the future will combine the labours of the missionary with those of the constable?

A CORRESPONDENT: In the ONCE A WEEK cartoon, the poet Browning is represented impersonating his own Pied Piper of Hamelen. It has often occurred

to me that the suggestion of his poem was originally given him by a passage in the *Spectator*, No. 5 (March 6th, 1710):—"I do not hear that any of the performers in our opera pretend to equal the famous Pied Piper, who made all the mice of a great town in Germany follow his music, and by that means cleared the place of those noxious little animals." I am not aware that this conjecture has been put in print before; but I must almost apologize for calling attention to so well-read an authority as Addison's and Steele's *Spectator*. To the edition of 1819 (in eight vols.), this foot-note is appended to the passage I have quoted:—

"The records of Hamelen, an ancient city on the banks of the Weser, give an account of a strange accident which befel on the 26th of June, 1284. Being at that time much pestered with rats which they could by no means destroy, a stranger at last undertook it, on the promise of reward; and immediately taking a tabret and pipe, the rats followed his music to the river, where they were all drowned; but being denied his reward, he left the town in a rage, and threatened revenge; accordingly, he returned next year, and by the same music enticed most of the children of the town after him to the mouth of a great cave, on the top of a neighbouring hill, called Koppelberg, where he and they entered, but were never more heard of. The citizens, for many years after, dated all their public writings from the day they lost their children, as appears by many old deeds and records. They still call the street through which the children passed Tabret-street; and at the mouth of the cave there is a monument of stone, with an inscription in barbarous Latin verse, giving an account of this tragical story, by which the citizens lost 130 boys."

This note was published half a century ago. Did it then relate matters of fact? Is this stone on the Koppelberg, with the "barbarous Latin verse," still to be seen? However this may be, I think it very probable the foot-note printed above was the form in which the legend he has turned into such interesting verse first met Mr. Browning's poetic eye. I know there are many allusions to the legend of the Pied Piper to be found; but the edition of the *Spectator* of 1819 so exactly tallies with the poet's version, that I trouble you with my guess.

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No. 265.

January 25, 1873.

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MY LITTLE GIRL.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XI.



UT Arthur went round, the same evening, to Philip's lodgings.

"How much did MacIntyre charge you for Madeleine's address?" asked the man of larger experience.

Arthur coloured—

"Well, we did drive a bargain. Why did you not send it to me?"

"First, because I did not possess it; secondly, because, if I had, MacIntyre was so entirely frank with me as to what he intended, that it would have gone to my heart to spoil his little game. Tell me how Madeleine is looking."

"Here is the address. Go and see her yourself."

"Is she milk and water? But of course—"

"Go and see her yourself."

"I don't know that I shall, Arthur. We are different, you and I. You are an eligible *parti*—I am only a detrimental."

"But, my dear fellow, there is no question of that sort of thing. Madeleine is not like the ordinary girls you meet."

"Oh," said Philip, "is she not? I don't go into society much myself, because I feel out of my element in that rank of life in which my fortunes allow me to circulate. The domestic business, with the conventional young woman, lacquered with accomplishments which get rubbed off when the babies come; the piano for the last new piece, and the song for the dear creature who breathes hard and thinks she sings; the mind without an idea outside the narrow circle in which it has been trained—I do not think, Arthur, that my idea of happiness is quite this."

"Well, well; but all women are not so. Madeleine is not."

"Give me," he went on—"give me some girl brought up out of ladies' circles and women's ways: brought up by a man: full of ideas, thoughts, and quaint fancies; pretty, in a way that the Tyburnian misses are not pretty; able to talk, able to amuse you, able to please you, when the little stock of accomplishments is all run through."

He was thinking of Lollie.

"A lady, and not brought up by ladies?" said Arthur.

"I was in 'society' the other day: five and twenty young ladies, whispering bitter things of each other, bursting with envy and malice. I want a girl who does not look on all other girls as rivals and enemies. I talked to one of them."

"You did not expect the poor girl to pour out her soul at the first interview."

"She had very little to pour. That little was poured. I came away early."

"That is not society. Come with me to see Madeleine?"

The other, who was in his bitterest mood, sneered in reply—

"They are all alike. Every woman wants to be admired more than other women in the room. That is the first thing. Without that, there is no real happiness. Then they want to be rich: not because they may live well, for they do not understand eating and drinking: not for the sake of art, because they only know the art chatter. If they felt art, do you think they would dress as they do? No, sir; they want money in order to make their acquaintance envious. For themselves, what a woman desires and likes most in the world is to be kept warm. Give the squaw her blanket, or the lady her cushion, and she is happy. Warmth, wealth, admiration: those are the three things she desires. What can we expect? Read the literature about women, from Anacreon to the comic papers. We have conspired together against the sex. We have agreed to keep them foolish and vain—to limit their aspirations to dress; and deuced well we have succeeded."

Arthur laughed.

"Take the Newgate Calendar, Phil, to represent manhood, if you like. Just as well exaggerate the faults of women and make them represent womanhood. Women love admiration because it is an instinct. Their influence is through their beauty. It is a net spread by nature to entrap and catch men, in order that they may be led heavenwards. Wild beasts, like you, who prefer the woods, full of pitfalls and snares, to the soft green glades—"

"Rubbish," said Philip.

"Not rubbish at all. Don't despise women—don't cry them down. Go in for marrying, and try the domestic happiness you declaim against."

"All which means that you are *épris* with Madeleine yourself, I suppose. It is, perhaps, the very best thing you can do. But look at the other side of the picture. Suppose that what we call the highest kind of life—by which you mean, I take it, the calm cultivation of all that is artistic, unbiassed by passion and undisturbed by regrets—is out of your reach, because you can't afford it, don't you think it prudent to say, 'Young man, you are not intended to marry. Do not be an accomplice in the production of a generation of paupers. On the other hand, get as much as you can out of life with the resources at your disposal.'"

"Every man may lead the higher life."

"Perhaps, if he remains unmarried. What kind of higher life is that in which one trembles at the butcher's bill, and eats out his heart thinking of the children's future? And, besides, your higher life—what is it? Bah! Wine, love, song! Get what you can, and leave the gods the rest. It is their care, I suppose—this 'rest,' whatever it is."

But he did call on Madeleine. Went to see her the very next day. Madeleine was alone, as it was one of Mrs. Longworthy's sick days—or, as she put it, one of those days when temper got the better of her.

Madeleine was not so unconstrained with him as with Arthur. Perhaps it was something in his look—perhaps the memory of old childish quarrels. People very seldom take kindly in after-life to those who have teased them as children. She was colder than to Arthur—asked but few questions of him, and turned the conversation on things general. Philip, in his unhappy way, chafed at his reception, because he knew how Arthur had been welcomed—putting it down as due to that fatal taint of blood.

"Do you like the army as a profession?" asked Madeleine.

"There is not much to like or dislike in it," he replied, carelessly. "It does to carry one along."

"To carry one along—yes, but not as the highest object of one's life, I suppose you mean?"

"I certainly did not mean that," replied Philip. "I know nothing about highest objects in life. My life consists in getting as much enjoyment as my income will admit. Very low aims, indeed, are they not?"

"Yes."

"At the same time, suppose I was to go in for the higher kind—very odd thing, Arthur is always talking about the higher life—I suppose I should do it because I enjoyed it best. Do you not think so?"

"Yes. But one ought not to be thinking about enjoyment."

"Pardon me—I only said that one *does* think about enjoyment."

"There is duty, at least," said Madeleine.

"Yes—my duties are light and easily fulfilled. When I have got through those, there is nothing left but to fill up the time, as I said, with as much amusement, enjoyment, frivolity, whatever you like, as my money will cover. As we are old acquaintances,

Madeleine, it is just as well that I should not pretend to anything but what I am. Now, tell me, if I may be impertinent, what you think I ought to do?"

"I don't know," she said. "Life is so terrible a thing at best, so full of responsibilities, of evils that must be faced, and dreadful things that cannot be suppressed, that I don't know what to say. It seems to me as if the whole duty of the rich man—"

"I am not a rich man."

"The man of leisure—the man of culture, were to throw himself among the people, and try to raise them—"

"You would make us all philanthropists, then?"

"I hardly know. If only—without societies and organizations—people would go among the poor and teach them: help, without money, you know. But one can only do oneself what one feels right."

Here, at least, was a woman different from the type he had set up the preceding night—different, too, from Laura.

"You are talking to a mere man of the world," said Philip, rising. "We have no ideas of duty, you know—only a few elementary rules of right and wrong, which we call the laws of honour. My friends, for instance, always pay up after each event. On the other hand, it is dangerous to have to do with them in the matter of horses—and they will take any advantage that fairly offers in the way of a bet. We like gathering in club smoking-rooms, drinking good wine, smoking good cigars. We like to be well dressed, to do certain things well, such as riding, billiard playing, and so forth—"

"But, Philip, does not this life tire you?"

"I assure you, not in the least. Greatly as I must fall in your eyes by the confession, I declare that I do not care one straw for my fellow-man. You tell me the people are starving. I say, there are poor-rates, rich men, and our luxurious staff of parsons, beadles, and relieving officers to help them. You say they are badly taught. Where, then, are the schools? I meet with the poor man in the street, and read of him in the paper. He has, it appears to me, two phases in his character. He either fawns or bullies. He begs or tries to rob. I am told that he gets large wages in the summer, which he spends in drink, and has nothing left for the winter. If I were a poor man, and knew that I should be pitied by chari-

table people directly I was hard up, I should do just the same thing. What is the poor man to me? I owe him nothing. I do not employ him. I do not get rich by his labour. Therefore, you see, I am quite indifferent to his sufferings, quite awake to his vices, and quite careless about his virtues."

Madeleine looked at him with astonishment.

"You are frank, indeed," she said. "But, believe me, you are quite wrong. I must teach you that the poor, whom you despise, are not worse than ourselves—better than your friends, if I may say so, because they help each other, and have sympathy. Why are you so frank? Why have you told me so much about yourself?"

"Because I am anxious that you should know me as I am," replied Philip.

"But I am sorry you told me what you are. After all, you have exaggerated. I shall wait for a woman's love to soften you."

A wondrously softened look did pass over Philip's eyes. He was thinking of the girl whom he was to meet the next day.

"Love," he said—"the old story. If I am to be reformed, I would rather meet my fate that way than any other. Forgive my bluntness, Madeleine. You see I do not belong to your world."

"But do belong to my world. It really is a better one than yours. Of course, we have our little faults; and we may be slow for you, and sometimes—what is it, that quality for which the French have no word, because they never understand it?—what is it that people are when they not only do their duty, but overdo it?"

"You mean your world is occasionally priggish."

"That is the word—not a lady's word, I know; but Mrs. Longworthy tells me when I make mistakes. And this word does so beautifully fit its meaning. Yes, priggish. Only English and Germans are that, I cannot tell why. But come into my world."

Philip shook his head.

"You are on one side of the stream, and I am on the other, and the stream is widening. Arthur is on your side, too. We can still talk. The time may come when the river will be so wide that we cannot even do that."

"I think I know what you mean," she replied. "Cross at once, and stay with us

—with those who—who love you, in memory of old days.”

“You cannot cross a river,” he said, smiling, “without a bridge or a boat. Just at present I see none. The bridges are all higher up, behind me; and so are the boats. And the two paths are getting farther and farther apart. Good-bye, Madeleine.”

He left her with these words. Very oddly, they recall my illustration from the works of Pythagoras a few chapters back. That must be because “*les esprits forts se rencontrent*.”

“Tell me,” said Mrs. Longworthy, at dinner, “what kind of man is this Mr. Philip Durnford.”

“He is not so tall as Arthur, has black hair, a black moustache, and large, soft eyes—almond-shaped eyes.”

“Oh. Did you ever see eyes like his anywhere else?”

“Yes; they are like the eyes of the mulattoes in Palmiste.”

“Humph!” said Mrs. Longworthy.

“He dresses very well, and he talks very well. Only, my dear Mrs. Longworthy, you know what I told you about the garden at Fontainebleau, when I saw it last.”

“Yes.”

“Well, Philip Durnford’s mind is like that garden—all overgrown with pumpkins.”

CHAPTER XII.

“LET us have,” said Venn, trimming the lamp on Chorus night, “a cheerful evening. What fresh disappointment has any one to communicate?”

“A lawyer,” said Lynn, “who would have sent me some cases, has absconded with other people’s money. That is all that has happened to me.”

“He may possibly come back,” said Jones. “My manager, who had just accepted my play, is a bankrupt. Perhaps Setebos, who troubles everything, ruined him to prevent the play coming out. I mourn for him.”

“He was not fair to outward view;

He was not nice to see:

His loveliness I never knew

Until he smiled on me.”

“As an honorary member of the Chorus,” said Arthur, “I can hardly be expected to have any misfortunes—consequently, I have none.”

“This,” said Venn, with a beaming face, “is quite like old times. I, too, have had my disappointment. I had spent the last twelve months in revising and polishing the *Opuscula*. They are now as complete as a Greek statue. I proposed them to a publisher. He kept my letter for a month, and then sent me a refusal. It is his loss pecuniarily, the world’s loss intellectually.”

“It is very sad,” sympathized Jones. “And yet, I dare say, you would not exchange your literary fame for my dramatic glory?”

“One great compensation of affliction,” Venn observed, “is the law of self-esteem. No man, whatever his drawbacks, would change with any other man. We admire ourselves for our very afflictions. We lie on our bed of torture till even the red-hot gridiron becomes a sort of spring mattress; and then we pity the poor devils grilling next to us. Following out this idea, as I intend to do, I shall write a life of that Jew whose teeth King John pulled out day by day. I shall show that he rather enjoyed it as he got on, and looked for it every morning, till the teeth were all gone. Then he talked about it for the rest of his life. So, too, the old woman, who hugs her rheumatism to her heart.”

“Ourselves are too much with us: late and soon,
Still at the mirror do we waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours.
We give ourselves our praise—a sordid boon.”

Jones made the above remark, which fell unnoticed.

“Another compensation,” said Lynn, “may be got from the magnitude of misfortunes. To have had more funerals than anybody else confers a distinction on any woman. To have had more MSS. rejected than anybody else confers a distinction upon you, my dear Venn.”

“Let us change the subject,” Venn replied, with a blush, showing that he felt the delicacy of the compliment. “I have now to submit to the Chorus a scheme by which all our fortunes may be made.”

He drew forth a bulky manuscript, tied with tape. They all rose, and began to look for their hats, with one accord.

Venn replaced the roll in the drawer with a sigh.

“You may sit down again,” he said. “You will be sorry, some time, not to have heard the prolegomena to the scheme. But I will only read the prospectus. You are

aware, perhaps, that a million a year is collected for the Conversion of the Blacks."

"It is a fact over which, in penniless moments, I have often brooded," said Jones.

"Then," said Venn, triumphantly, "let us raise the same sum for converting the Whites."

"What are we to convert them to?"

"I shall give nothing for converting anybody," Lynn growled.

"Don't talk like an atheist, Lynn; because this is a philanthropic scheme, and, besides, one out of which money may be made. We shall Christianize the world. We shall teach the people that their religion need not consist in going to church every Sunday, and sometimes reading a 'chapter.' We shall begin with the House of Lords. There is a great field open among the peers and their families. The House of Commons—which comes next upon my list—will, after a few years' labour among them, be so changed that the constituents won't know their own members again. No more putting into office because a man makes himself disagreeable out of it; no more bolstering a measure because it is brought forward by a minister; no more legislating for class interests; no more putting off for a better day. And, above all, a stern sense of Christian duty which will limit every speaker to ten minutes, like a Wesleyan preacher at a field meeting. Next to the House of Commons, we shall take the Inns of Court. Oh, my readers——"

"You are quite sure that you are not quoting from the prolegomena?" said Jones.

"Pardon me—I was about to delight you with perhaps as fine a piece of declamation as you have ever heard. Now you shall not have it. The Inns of Court will be taken by a series of door-to-door visitations; and the missionaries, who will not be highly paid, will receive special allowances for repairs to that part of their dress most likely to be injured. If one converts a barrister, he shall be promoted to the conversion of the bench. If one converts a judge, he shall be still further promoted to the conversion of certain ex-Lord Chancellors. In the army, after a few months of our work, you will find so great a change that the officer will actually work at his profession; the same rules will be maintained for officers as for men—those about getting drunk, and so forth. And in the navy,

similar good effects will be produced. The best results will be obtained in the trading classes. For then the grocer will no more sand his sugar and mix his tea; the publican will sell honest drink; and all shall be contented with a modest profit."

"Of course," said Lynn, "the missionaries will behave in exactly the same way as if they were at Jubbulpore or Timbuctoo—go in and out, uninvited; and, like district visitors, they will make any impertinent observations they please?"

"Of course; and the consequences will be part of the day's work."

"I quite approve of the scheme," said Jones. "Only, I don't see my own share in it."

"You are to be secretary, Jones. It is your name that we shall put forward."

"Then I retire."

"Do not, Jones, let a promising scheme be ruined at the very outset by an obstinate selfishness. What matters it if the world does scoff?"

But Jones was obdurate.

"Then, Jones, you shall have nothing, while Lynn and I will divide all the profits. I go on to a second scheme. This will not be so lucrative, but still safe. It is nothing less, gentlemen, than the establishment of a Royal Literary College—a college devoted to the art and mystery of writing—not, understand, for the old and worn-out purposes of conveying thought, but for the modern purpose of conveying amusement."

"It sounds well," said Jones. "Of course, as it is the project of the Chorus, it will fail."

"Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?"

"And now listen to the prospectus, which you will find to be drawn up with great care."

"ROYAL LITERARY COLLEGE."

"The promoters of this institution, bearing in mind the enormous increase in the population, the consequent increase in the number of readers, and the necessity of providing for their daily, weekly, and monthly requirements, propose to establish a college expressly for the training of popular mediocrity. They have observed with pain that, in spite of the efforts of able editors, a great deal of time is still spent in providing papers containing thought. And though a large number of these leaders of popular

amusement care nothing for the merits of a paper, provided it be written by a well-known man, there are yet a few who study to present their readers with what they require least—food for reflection. Among other objects, it is proposed to prevent this lamentable waste of time and energy; and, in doing so, to anticipate the tastes of the age and the wants of the reading public. Literature, in fact, is to be reduced to a science. The increased demand for literary men by no means represents an increased supply of genius. On the contrary, the promoters are of serious opinion that genius was never at so low an ebb as at present, and the art of writing upon nothing, although it has not yet been systematically taught, never at so high a pitch. In order to convince themselves of this, the promoters, by means of a sub-committee, have carefully studied the whole popular literature of the last twelve months. They are happy in being able to report that there has not been, so far as their labours have permitted them to discover, a single new truth introduced to the British public, not a single good thing said, nothing old newly set, and not one good poem by a new man. This they consider highly satisfactory and gratifying. And it is in the hope of perpetuating, improving, and extending this state of things, that they desire to found the Royal Literary College.

“In the ordinary course of events, it cannot be but that an occasional genius will arise. Should such appear by any accident among the students of the college, he will be promptly and firmly expelled. But the college will gladly welcome any one, of either sex, who, having a quick memory and a facile pen, is quite justified in considering himself a genius; and every allowance will be made for the weaknesses of humanity, should any student give himself, or herself, the airs of genius.

“As students of both sexes will be admitted within the college, the promoters, considering how great a stimulus poverty is to work, will encourage, by every means in their power, early marriages. In case of husband and wife being both students, arrangements will be made to enable them to starve together, with their innocent progeny, outside the college walls. No chaplain will be appointed, as the promoters desire to consider the college quite undenominational. In deference, however, to popular opinion, a chapel will be built,

in which service will be held on Sundays, in as many Christian denominations as time permits. The hall will be set apart for the more advanced thinkers, who will not, however, be allowed to smoke during the delivery of orations.

“The great festivals of the college will be Commemoration Day, Old Dramatist Day, Old Chronicle Day, Scandalous Chronicle and Memoirs Day, Horace Walpole Day, Boswell Day, and French Play Day. On these days will be celebrated the names of those great men who, by their writings, have furnished models for copying, or provided storehouses for plagiarists. Every student will be expected to produce a panegyric in his own line. Those which, in the opinion of the examiners, have most merit—from the Literary College point of view—will be printed and kept for one month. The successful students will read them out in the college hall; but no one will be compelled to listen.

“There will be no holidays or vacations. Every student will absent himself as often as he pleases. On Sundays, conveniences will be provided for intending excursionists.

“The college library will not, on any account, receive the works of the college students.

“In the examinations for scholarships and degrees, if any composition, in the eyes of the examiners, should be found to partake of the nature of philosophy, research, or erudition; or should the reading of any composition demand the exercise of thought; or should any reflect on the glory and dignity of light literature, the offender shall be publicly reprimanded, and, on a repetition of the offence, shall be disgracefully expelled. No objection will be made to the offering up of prayers for any erring student.

“The college will be divided into several sections. These, which are not yet quite settled, will be somewhat as follows:—

“I. POETRY.—Students will be recommended to take a year's course at this, after the regular three years at any of the other branches. Several gentlemen will be invited to lecture from time to time. Mr. Browning on the Art of Obscurity and Apparent Depth; also on the Art of going on for Ever. Mr. Swinburne on the Attractiveness of the Forbidden, and on the Melody of the English Language. Mr. Tupper on Catching a Weasel Asleep,

applied to the British public. Mr. Buchanan on the Art of Self-laudation. Mr. Rossetti on the Mystery of Mediæval Mummeries; also on the Fleshly School and on the Art of Poetical Pretension. Mr. Tennyson on quite a new subject: The Yawning of Arthur; or, Guinevere Played Out.

"The students will be required to read the mortal and perishable works of some of these poets. They will also be examined in the poems of Southey, Cowper, the imitations of Pope, and the magazine poetry of the day, particularly that which decorates the monthlies.

"II. The second branch will be the writing of essays. It is, of course, superfluous to say that A.K.H.B. will be invited to undertake the department of Common-place and Glorified Twaddle. He will be assisted, provided their services can be secured, by the authors of the monthly magazine essays. A large number of clergymen, including the Master of the Temple and several of the bench of bishops, will be asked to instruct in reeling off 'goody' talk by the foot or yard,' as required, for religious papers.

"Certain essay writers will be excluded altogether—among them will be Emerson and Oliver Wendell Holmes; while but a sparing use will be allowed of Sir Arthur Helps.

"The authors from whom cribbing will be recommended are Steele, Addison, Goldsmith, and Johnson. Montaigne will also be largely used.

"III. HISTORICAL ARTICLES.—This department is exceedingly difficult to arrange. It is hoped that Canon Kingsley may be induced to give a lecture on the Historical Forgiveness of Sins, based on that celebrated essay of his where he has shown that Raleigh's sins were forgiven because a baby was born unto him. He may also be asked to give over again his Cambridge course. The gentleman who writes the weekly articles in the *Saturday* abusing Mr. Froude will be invited to illustrate the method of establishing a raw, and always pegging at it. He will also be asked to give a lecture on Mr. Freeman, called. 'Moi et Moimême.' But the arrangements for the historical course are not yet completed, and the promoters beg for further time.

"IV. We come next to leading articles.

On this head it will only be observed here that the paper which has the largest circulation, whatever that may be, will be chosen as the model. The *Saturday*, the *Spectator*, the *Examiner*, and a few other papers which occasionally address the intellect, will be excluded from consideration.

"V. The department of novels will receive the most careful attention, and the most profound study. All the students, without any exception, will be required to pass through it; and no student shall receive a degree, a diploma, or any certificate of honour, until he has produced a three-volume novel, complete, finished, and ready for the publisher. The professor of the branch should be, if he will undertake the duties, Mr. Anthony Trollope. There will be lecturers to point out the secrets of manufacture in all the sub-divisions: the principal of these will be the religious novel, in which the works of Miss Yonge and Miss Wetherell will, of course, form the most useful guides to the student. Lord Lytton will serve for the student of the sentimental, the political, and the highly coloured unreal. There will be several forms of the muscular novel, including the rollicking, the Christian hero, the sentimental, the pint-pewter crushing, and the remorseful. Ouida, Miss Broughton, Charles and Henry Kingsley, and Mr. Lawrence, will be the chosen models for this sub-division.

"For the sensational, there can be but one model.

"For the plain work of the department, the mere storytelling, with puppets for characters, of course Mr. Wilkie Collins will be the guide.

"If there *should* be any student who would rashly propose to make a picture of real life, he will be set to study Charles Reade; but not in the college, from which Mr. Reade's works will be excluded.

"The promoters will have great pleasure in receiving tenders and designs for a building. Names of candidates will be received at once by the secretary, Mr. Hartley Venn, M.A.'

"There!" said Venn, "what do you think of that?" He sat down and wiped his forehead. "I have thought of you both. You, Lynn, shall be the standing counsel, with a large retaining fee. You, Jones, shall be professor of the dramatic art. You will observe that,

out of regard to your feelings, I abstained from mentioning this department. I myself shall be the first warden, with a salary of £2,000 a year."

SKETCHES OF IRISH LIFE.—VI.

A SHOOTING EXPLOIT.

[The scene of this sketch is laid in the county Antrim, Ireland.]

"OH, by the good daylight, Bill," said Tam, making a sudden stop, "thonder's Nolan. Now, look here, Bill, that fella has nothin' to do with this bog, an' if he comes over to spake to us, we'll jist tell him to go to the owl chap, or we'll sen' him. Hang me, but we'll not be able to peep out o' the door, after a while, for gamekeepers."

"Is thon Nolan? Ay, throth, so it is; an' he's comin' over, too. Well, we'll not stir. He has no more right here than we have. His boundhary comes no further than the river. Devil fly away with him, he'll maybe knock us out of the dhrake."

I may hint to the reader that Nolan was a gamekeeper of ill-repute in the country for his malice and painstaking malevolence, which, it was believed, had amounted on more than one occasion to perjury. One of those petty tyrants he was, whose chief delight is in over-riding every one subject to them in any particular, and giving them as much annoyance as possible. The man was evidently approaching us; but we walked on without paying the slightest heed to him. Suddenly the dogs set, and five or six snipe rose before them. We fired and killed just one each. Our indifference to him seemed to irritate the keeper; for no sooner did we discharge our pieces, than, not content with walking, he began to run towards us. When we had bagged our birds, Tam turned towards him, and shouted, with the utmost *sang froid*—

"Don't be in a hurry, big son, ye'll be in plenty of time to see us."

The man made no reply, but continued to hasten towards us. When within fifty yards of us he slackened his pace, and then dropped into a walk, at which healthful exercise he came up to us.

"A want to know yer authority fur shootin' over this bog," said he, in a rough, threatening tone.

"That's jist what I wud very much like to

knew about you, Misther Nolan," said Bill, quietly.

This seemed a staggerer; but in a moment he recovered himself, and said—

"You know tarnation well a have authority to watch the bog; but ye'll fin' that sort iv thing 'll not do wi' me."

"Hiv ye authority; an' wud ye just be good enough to tell me who the authority is, Misther Nolan?"

"That's none o' your business; and besides"—changing his tactics—"a want to see yer game licence; an' it's a fine iv twenty poun' if yiz haven't them."

"Tell me, Misther Nolan, do ye see thon puddle?"

"What about't?"

"Wud ye like yer nose dipped in it?"

"Oh, ye needn't think to frighten me that way, 'am—"

"Bekase if ye wud, ye know, ye hiv only got to gab a while longer."

"Who wud do it?"

"Who wud do it?"

"Ay."

"Now, Nolan, a don't want to hurt ye, ye know; but yer very well aware that ye hiv no business here whativer; an' it would be far betther fur ye to jist go yer own road—an' we'll go ours."

"Who wud dip my nose in the puddle?"

"If ye give two more words iv yer owl jaw, a'll dip ye all in it."

"You wud?"

"Yis."

As Bill gave this affirmative, he moved towards him.

"Well, it's all right," continued the keeper, curbing his temper, as he surveyed Bill from head to foot; "but a'll know you boys again, an' if a iver fin' out yer names, a'll bring yiz up before the magistrates, as sure as my name's Nolan."

"Ye may go home an' see if the champ's ready," cried Tam after him, derisively.

"Shut up, Tam—let him depart in pace," said Bill.

"Oh, take yer time now, take yer time," said the keeper, turning round and speaking in a voice of suppressed rage; "ye'll whistle another tune when a—"

"Aw, a tell you what it is, Nolan," said Bill, interrupting, "jist shave on, an' give us no more iv yer owl talk. Yer thought we wur saft, an' that ye wud make us believe ye had somethin' to do with this bog; but it wudn't do. As regards the licence, do

ye think we're bound to shaw our licence to iver y rapscallion that likes to ask us?"

"Who's a rapscallion?" said the keeper, putting himself in a threatening attitude, but remaining discreetly where he was.

"A chap the' call Nolan, that wud swear agin his own mother, if he thought it wud bring him a sixpence," replied Bill; suggestively adding, "now, Nolan, ye wur bate twice before fur yer impurence."

After venting his passion in sundry vows of vengeance and a few oaths, Mr. Nolan took the hint, and went away in something of a similar state of mind to that of a man who jumps out of bed on a December morning to find his pantaloons stolen.

"Boys, but that's a murdherin' villain," said Bill, as, after gazing some time at the retreating form of the gamekeeper, he dropped the butt-end of his gun upon his foot, and began to load.

"Oh, as big a rascal as iver danced a hornpipe without music," replied Tam, following his brother's example in reloading his gun. "Now, we must have this dhrake," said Tam, warmly, as once more he strode on towards the place where it had alighted.

But he had no sooner spoken the words, than fate seemed to say, "No, you mustn't," for forthwith the drake rose about a hundred and fifty yards from us, with a quack, quack, that was evidently meant as farewell. Tam stood as if spellbound, and when he had recovered his speech, uttered a few blessings on the ill-luck, on the drake, and on himself for not being on the right spot at the right time. Mr. Nolan, however, came in for the largest share of them. But Tam was agreeably stopped in these expressions of his equanimity and goodwill by the movements of the drake itself. That member of the respectable family *Anatida* had simply flown to another part of the bog, and was there making circles in the air previous to another descent.

"Watch it, now, watch it," exclaimed Tam, with great eagerness; "it'll be down this minute—look, watch—look, watch—hooh! it's ours yit. A'll bate the price of half-ones all roun' in Molly Ann Muck-Nab's, that it'll be me that'll kill that dhrake."

"Done," said Bill.

"Done," said Tam; and again off we started after the drake.

"This should be about the place. Steady, dogs, steady," said Tam, moving about

stealthily, and trying hard to look everywhere at the same time.

"It shud," said Bill, standing quite motionless, and looking expectantly around—"it shud; and all I hiv got to say is, mind the half-ones; bekase—wo, good dogs, steady—gen-tly, now, gen-tly; wo—go forrit—down, sir—take time—down, dogs—wo, now—wo—wo—wo—ha!"

"Qua-a-ack, quack, quack, quack, quack," suddenly said the drake, as, with loud flapping, it rose within three yards of one of the dogs' noses. They were the last words it was ever heard to utter in this vale of tears. The reports of the "crowbar" and Tam's first barrel came quick and almost simultaneous. But the member of the family *Anatida* flew on. Immediately after came the report of Tam's second barrel. But the member of the family *Anatida* flew on. Speedily following was the report of my first barrel. But the member of the family *Anatida* flew on. Then, lastly, came the report of my second barrel, fired completely at random, for I was in great haste to prevent the escape of the bird, which seemed so certain just then.

The member came tumbling down, and in five minutes more was suspended by a cord round Tam's neck, and hung thus under his coat behind—the only available space remaining.

"Well, since Adam was a wee fella, a niver seen such sporting as that—a niver seen nathin' like it," said Bill.

"No, nor no other man afore ye," acquiesced Tam, "divil the bit; but Misther — is going to wallop us hollow."

"Sowl, he *has* done it. Hillo, thonder's Misther Coodle. A think when he comes we'll take the back road home. It's near three o'clock, so by the time we git home it'll be dark; an' we'll need to go purty early to that place. We cudn't carry any more birds if we shot them, any way."

This then being agreed to, we skirted the bog, and met Mr. Coodle, who now seemed exceedingly happy, and was looking the very personification of attractiveness.

He had lost himself inside a top-coat which would have gone about three times round him, and nothing was to be seen of him above the collar but a very red nose, a pair of twinkling eyes, and the immortal castoral. The garment extended exactly to his knee, and from that down a pair of corduroys enfolded his supporters to nearly the

ankle, though not quite to it. Below these were a pair of brogues that certainly could not have weighed less than half a stone each—a little fact which told materially on the grace of Mr. Coodle's pedestrianism.

In fact, I feel bound to say that had any romantic young maiden but happened to cast her eye over that *tout ensemble*, she must of necessity have lost her heart instantaneously.

"Yer lookin' purty well now, Misther Coodle," said Tam, smiling benignly, as he ran his eye from the red nose to the brogues, and from the brogues to the red nose.

"A hope yer not cowl' in there," added Bill.

"Superlatively comfortable, my dear friends—superlatively comfortable. That was a most egregious error I made in stepping into that place. Dear me, I was fully persuaded that my existence was about to be abridged there and then. But how have you got on since I left you? Did you kill the drake?"

Tam showed the hump on his back, and explained what it was.

"Dear me, I am glad at that—delighted at that. Now, let us move on; the air is growing very sharp, and I would like to—well, really now, Mr. Hardy—it's not possible you're taking that out again? No, thank you, now, not any—not any—not any, yit a little—not—"

"Baldherdash, we may as well finish it now as again—take it up, an' no bletherin' about it."

"Oh, thank you—but, really, now, Mr. Hardy—you know—well, since you insist—"

Mr. Coodle raised the vessel to his mouth, there was a gurgle or two in his throat, the vessel was handed back to Bill, and he was just the same as if nothing of the kind had occurred. No wry faces, no wiping the mouth with the back of the hand, no manifestation whatever, except a smile of placid delight, took place as he brought the utensil from his lips.

When we had all finished our shares, we bent our steps homeward, Tam taking the lead, and Bill, the pedagogue, and I walking behind. We were approaching Molly Ann McNab's, and the scholar was beginning to look thoughtful.

"I understand Molly's doing well here," said the voice from the great coat.

"Ay, so I b'leeve," replied Bill.

"She's a very decent kind of woman," replied the voice again.

"Deed is she; all that," replied Bill.

"Ay, indeed, a very decent woman—a very nice kind of woman," ruminated the voice. There was a few moments' silence. "Indeed, when I think of it, I should have called on that woman long ago. I'm sure she'll think it strange that I never look near her. She and I, you know, are far-out friends—cousins-germain, as the French say."

"Well, ye can call now if ye like," said Bill in an obliging tone.

"Yes, I'll have to do that," was the reflective answer.

There was another moment or two of silence, and we were rapidly nearing Molly Ann's.

"I have just been thinking, gentlemen, that, perhaps, half-glasses more of Molly Ann's Coleraine might not—indeed, I am fully convinced would not—cause us any physical inconvenience—that, indeed, it would be rather beneficial than prejudicial. Whisky is a thing I don't much care for myself, but there are circumstances, gentlemen—circumstances under which the human frame or constitution is greatly enhanced by the medical attributes of the component qualities of that most valuable liquid, inasmuch that the influx and desiccation of blood to the heart is paramously promoted and assisted, and the entire system consequently benefited in a very high degree—and more particularly so—I say especially so in a winter day, when the circulation is more liable to get into desuetude, and therefore requires more animal heat, as the physiologists would say, to keep it in a constant state of ebullition, which is absolutely essential for convalescence," said the voice from the great coat.

"Iv coorse," replied Bill, in despair, "there's no doubt iv it."

"What's that?" asked Tam, turning round as his ear caught the last few words of this Ciceronian oration.

But the seer had lagged a few paces to philosophize, so Tam addressed himself in a low voice to Bill—

"What's that he was sayin', Bill?"

"Oh, Lord only knows," returned Bill, with a wag of the head; "but a think he wants us into Molly's."

"Yes, gentlemen, yes; it is a plain axiom that a little drop more really good whisky would occasion us no injury—just as a wind-up—or, as the Latins had it, as an ultima-

tum to our day's amusement," continued the voice from the coat.

And after some vain remonstrance, we entered Molly Ann McNab's.

"Now, misther, don't you stan'—nor Tam, don't you aither. A glass more 'll jist be as much as we can dacently carry, an' be ready for that soirée at seven o'clock," whispered Bill to us in the passage.

Molly Ann was all the schoolmaster had said of her. She was a widow, moreover, not bad-looking, and only about forty years of age. It was wonderful to mark the intimacy which existed between her and the pedagogue.

On entering, he shook hands with her, looked into her very nice brown eyes, holding her hand in his, and, as it appeared to me, venturing a slight pressure, which was not ill taken, if indeed it was not returned. After some inquiry as to her health and welfare, and sundry glances of admiration, which generally broke into sunny smiles, he turned and walked into a very snug little room off the bar.

"This way, gentlemen, this way," said he, looking quite at home. "Mrs. McNab, might we trouble you?—I suppose it'll be the same, gentlemen?"

"Yes."

"Might we trouble you for four half-glasses of Coleraine?"

When the four half-glasses of Coleraine were consumed, and also four half-ones more that Bill ordered, the schoolmaster became particularly attached to talking, and grew unaccountably careless about the pronunciation of his words.

Bill and Tam were more good-natured than ever, and I sat in a corner smilingly looking on.

When we came out to the bar again, Mr. Coodle's regard for Mrs. McNab had increased immensely.

"Missus McNab—Missus McNab—yer a dacent woman, Missus McNab—I—I like you, Missus McNab—I love you, Missus McNab."

"Tut, tut, Mr. Coodle; an' you a married man: think shame o' yerself."

"Missus McNab—Missus McNab—come here; what are ye afraid of, Mrs. McNab?—come here an, an', an' give us a kiss, like a brave nice woman as ye are, Missus McNab."

"Away with ye, Mr. Coodle; have some

sense, man. What wud yer wife think o' ye, if she heard ye talkin' that way?"

The kiss was pleaded earnestly for, but Mrs. McNab could not see it.

"Come, Misther Coodle, we'll hiv to go. Well, good-bye, Mrs. McNab," said Bill.

"Good-bye, Mr. Hardy—good-bye, sir—good-bye, Tam," returned Mrs. McNab.

Still the schoolmaster stood in the doorway, looking back at the widow, with a slight swaying motion.

"Good-bye, Missus—hic—Missus McNab. Ye wouldn't give me the kiss—well, it's no matter—it's no matter—you and I's friends, after all—eh, aren't we?"

And he went back to shake hands with her the second time.

After some little delay we got him out, and, linked affectionately together, we proceeded homeward—the instructor of youth singing with great zeal that jolly old chanson, "Robin Tamson's smiddie, O," with a happy variation of "fol de rols" and "ridos," interspersed with a choice selection of "whacks" and "right toodle ump a-days."

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—I.

NEW ZEALAND settlers are neither a romantic nor a superstitious class of men. Their active, energetic, hardworking, matter-of-fact life goes far to remove any weakness of this sort, which, were it not for this reason, would no doubt soon take root and flourish amongst men leading, if not romantic, at least solitary lives. Many of them live from month to month, almost from year to year, far from all civilization, never seeing any one to talk to, having no books or papers to read, except when as a great favour they can borrow some old, well-thumbed novel, or perhaps, as a greater treat, an English newspaper—it may be six months old, yet new to them; and it is devoured with an interest which you gentlemen who quietly read the *Times* every morning, whilst munching your toast, can form no idea of. Perhaps it would be saying too much to assert that among men leading such a Robinson Crusoe existence superstition is unknown; still, the number who really believe in "ghosts," "warnings," and such-like uncanny things, is wonderfully small—smaller, I believe, than in any part of England. Of course, I make no mention of Scotland, which I take to be the legitimate birthplace

and nursery of "bogies" and "kelpies," and where "second sight" is a sort of heirloom, handed down from generation to generation, along with the family frying-pan watch. The climate may possibly have some influence in dispelling such fancies, for it is a notable fact that the Maoris have less superstition than other aboriginal savages, although their numerous legends and traditions abound with the most impossible romances and exaggerations.

So it happens that a genuine New Zealand ghost story is rare. I say "genuine" advisedly; because ghosts are not unfrequently seen, but, with very few exceptions, their spiritual existence is easily traced to an undue and improper mixture of Hollands and water, or, as it is usually called there, "square gin," owing to the shape of bottle it is sold in—a horrible drink, tasting of turpentine and other equally palatable ingredients; but, as it is strong and cheap, and very intoxicating at the price, in great demand.

Kennedy's tale, which I am about to relate, has the one merit of being true; and this is the only apology I can offer for it. Excepting the names and one or two trifling alterations, I shall try to tell it as nearly as possible as it really happened.

I do not pretend to account for the circumstances. I offer no sort of explanation; nor do I claim any right to call it more than a coincidence, although I take the liberty of heading it "A New Zealand Ghost." But this I do in the hope of attracting attention, just as the dealer labels his goods "superior" or "extra," hoping by this means to gain customers and dispose of his wares.

Some six or seven years ago I was one of a party of four who were engaged in driving a "mob" of cattle from the southern part of Canterbury to Hokitiki—a new gold field on the west coast, where we hoped to find a market for them. We had had a very hard day's work forcing them across the Rangitata, and were now encamped close under the high terrace which extends all along the north bank of the river.

The province of Canterbury is in the middle island of New Zealand, and is one of, if not the most important part of the island. Its formation is peculiarly well adapted for the breeding and fattening of sheep and cattle, and its climate is perhaps the best in the world for these purposes. Until a few years ago, when gold was dis-

covered, this was the only business of the country. Now, however, that gold has worked its rapid changes, business of all kinds has increased. Towns are springing up and farms are extending in all directions, and slowly, but surely, driving the sheep and cattle farmers farther back each year; and soon all the land which is capable of cultivation will be ploughed and fenced, leaving to the original pioneers of the country only the steep, rugged mountains, and the parts of the plains which are too sterile and stony for the plough.

The Canterbury plains extend over one hundred and fifty miles in length, varying in width from fifteen to over thirty miles—bare, bleak plains, without any shelter, and without trees, intersected with wide river-beds. These river-beds are often half a mile wide, and in some instances much more—the Rakaia, which is the widest and most dangerous to cross, being quite a mile and a half wide. The Rangitata is about a mile wide, and, owing to the large stones and extreme swiftness of the current, is a very difficult and dangerous one to ford, and has been the scene of many sad and fatal accidents. These rivers are chiefly fed by the melting of the snow on the mountains; and in spring and summer, when the hot winds or "nor'-westers" prevail, are often swollen to such an extent as to be unfordable by horsemen, and, of course, perfectly impassable to men on foot. During each "fresh," the fords, or shallow parts of the river, shift, and, as the water becomes thick and muddy, it is difficult to find new fords. Hence accidents are frequent, more particularly as on each side of the rivers there generally stands a small public-house or inn, where the weary or timid traveller has something to keep his courage up and cheer him before venturing into the freezing cold water. So often was this the cause of fatal accidents, that it used to be proverbial that in New Zealand the only deaths which occurred resulted from an undue mixing of spirits and water, or, in other words, delirium tremens and drowning—very often the combined effects of both. The swiftness of the current in the Rangitata is extraordinary; and to give some faint idea of it, I may mention that I have often seen the side of my horse which was up stream, and so exposed to the whole strength of the current, wet nearly over the withers, whilst the other side was nearly

untouched and dry. It is therefore no small wonder that these rivers are a source of anxiety to those about to cross, and of congratulation when passed and, for the time at least, done with.

On the north bank of the Rangitata there is a high and nearly precipitous terrace, up which it is nearly impossible to climb, except here and there, where rain has washed out long, deep channels; so, trusting to our cattle not finding one of these in the dark, and to their being too tired with the knocking about we had given them in crossing the river to stray far, we determined not to watch them, but to enjoy, for one night at least, complete, undisturbed rest.

Fancy us, then, sitting and lying round a bright, cheerful, warm fire, with the clear, starry sky overhead, a deep, black, impenetrable darkness round us, and the noise of the rushing river rising and falling in melancholy cadence on our ears—now sharp, loud, and angry, then sad and wailing—and you will pardon me if, at such a time and under such circumstances, the tale I am about to relate made a deep and lasting impression on me.

Our party, as I have said, consisted of four. Charlie Stevens, a young settler, who had a fine station on the Waitaki, and the owner of the cattle we had in charge. Pat Kennedy, a native of Victoria—a bold, determined, harum-scarum young fellow of about three and twenty, one of the best and smartest hands to be found at all sorts of colonial work, from cutting and splitting timber to branding cattle, and in his element when riding and breaking young horses. He was about the best rider I ever met with, and his pet amusement was to get some “buck-jumping” brute to tame and conquer, and he would go any distance to find one. The other two were Bill Walker and your humble servant, Harry Ricketts. Bill Walker had not been long in the colonies, and was unused to the rough sort of life we were leading. Stevens had met him in Dunedin a short time before, nearly starving, and without any clothes, except some tattered sailor's things, and had taken him on for this job to give him a start. He was a very nice, gentlemanly, and well-educated fellow, a pleasant companion, much liked by all of us; and took our “chaff” about his being a “new chum” in good part.

It is curious the sort of contempt “new chums” are treated with by the old hands,

who seem to take it for granted that any one lately arrived from the mother country must be like a child just loosed from his mother's apron strings; and still more curious is it that the victims seldom or never resent or dispute it. As for myself, I was almost a native, as I had passed nearly all my life of twenty-two years in Australia and New Zealand; and so knew more of bullock-driving, branding, and riding after wild cattle than of civilized life; and was rather inclined to despise any one not quite as well up in such matters as myself, forgetting that I was nearly totally ignorant of other and more refined accomplishments.

“Run down to the creek, and fill the kettle, Bill; and we'll have some grog and hot water before turning in,” said Charlie, filling his pipe for the fourth time since supper. “I, for one, mean to have a great try to-night to make up for some of the sleep I have lost since we left the Waitaki, and won't want much rocking to sleep, I fancy.”

Off goes Bill, and soon returns with the kettle, which, as a matter of course, he carefully places on the fire with the spout up the flame.

“Now, then, chummy”—we called him chummy to tease him—“there you go doing your best to spoil our drink,” cries Pat. “Don't you know you'll smoke the water, sticking the spout up the chimney? I don't object to a taste of smoke in potheen; but sure, I can do without it in the water. Why,” he added, as he lifted the lid and peered in, “if he hasn't forgotten to empty out the old tea leaves. What nice grog you would give us. Be off and fill it again; and I say, Bill, just give the kettle a wash out this time.”

Soon we had each a tin pannikin of stiff, hot grog, and were making ourselves as jolly as wet clothes and the possibility of sleeping in still wetter blankets, with no roof over us but the “spacious firmament on high, with all its blue,” very “ethereal sky,” would allow us. Each man sucked away most conscientiously at a short black pipe, and from time to time washed down the smoke by taking a pull at the contents of the pannikin.

“What shall we do to-morrow, Charlie?” I asked. “The cattle want a day's rest; so I vote we stay here, and give them and ourselves one. This is the best place for fire-

wood I know of, until we get near to the west coast; so here I propose we stay and get our clothes and blankets dried."

"I agree with you, and I think we might as well stop here, Harry. What do you think, Pat?" said Stevens.

"Well, I'm for going on in the morning. The feed on the Hinds is first-rate; for the swamp was all burned off last September, and the cattle will be certain to settle on it. But if we stay here, we will have to watch them to-morrow night, a job I don't like much on this river-bank, I can tell you, after—And," added Pat, breaking off short, "we could take a few articles with us for Harry's benefit."

"Do you think that old spotted cow and calf will manage to do the twelve miles over the stones?" inquired Stevens.

"Oh, yes; she will get on all right, if we make an early start. I'll be up as soon as it is light, and get them all together and started; so that they will be a mile or so on their road before you fellows have got breakfast ready."

"To tell you the real truth," said Pat, "I don't care to stay any longer than I can avoid, near the 'Rankitanki,' as old Billy used to call it."

"Then we must go on, if that is it," replied Stevens. "But what is your objection to stay here? For my part, I would rather stay here, where we have both wood and shelter, than at the Hinds, where we will have neither."

"I have a very strong objection to remaining here; but if I were to tell you my reason for wishing to push on, you would only make fun of me for it," said Pat, looking straight into the fire.

"Come, out with it, Pat," cried I. "It isn't a ghost that you expect to see, Kennedy?"

"Well, Harry, I don't exactly expect to see a ghost," replied Pat, seriously, but half ashamed of owning the truth; "but, all the same, I would rather not stay here to-morrow night. But if you fellows care to listen, I will tell you what my reason really is."

"Get ahead then, Pat, my boy, before the grog is finished," said Stevens.

"Let me put some more wood on the fire first," I added; "and then I will be all attention."

Taking a good drink, and clearing his throat, Pat commenced as follows.

A NEW ZEALAND GHOST.

You remember last year I took a lot of horses up to Christchurch, for Maxwell, on the other side of the river. It will be exactly a year the day after to-morrow since I started with them. The weather was much the same as it is now. It had been blowing hard from the north-west, and the river was very high; and we had been waiting for some days, unable to cross. Knowing that we were likely to have a tough job taking the horses—which were mostly young and wild—off the run where they had been bred, we thought it better to ride over to the river the day before we started, and look out for a good crossing, so as to be able to drive them straight there at once. Accordingly, a year ago to-morrow, Maxwell, Jim Wright, and I, started, taking old White with us, to find a suitable place to cross the river.

I don't know whether you remember Maxwell's old Scotch shepherd, White. Oh, you do. Then you know what a stiff, hard, wiry old chap he was. Like most ignorant Scotchmen, he was very superstitious—I say ignorant, but I believe all Scotchmen are alike in that respect, and believe more or less in ghosts, second sight, and other uncanny things, much as black fellows believe in "debbles, debbles"—and used to say that what he called the "gift"—Lord defend me from such a "gift"!—of second sight was in his family; that his father, grandfather, and as far back as only a Scotchman—"Or an Irishman, eh, Pat?" growled Bill)—can trace it, had it; and although he never, so far as I know, positively said he also inherited it, yet he evidently thought and rather implied so.

He did not look very imaginative, did he? That hard, yellow, leathery, lantern-jawed face, with high cheek-bones; glittering, cold gray eyes; long, lank, straight, sandy hair; his face destitute of beard and eyebrows; his figure short, stooping, spare, and wiry—always reminding me of Don Quixote, the Knight of the Rueful Countenance—appeared to be too commonplace to be imaginative; and I much doubt if he ever gave a thought beyond the wonder as to what had become of the "twa wee bits o' black yowes" that he has as marked sheep. Well, you know Maxwell is not more superstitious than other people; nor do I think that I am.

("I don't think you are," laughed Stevens.)

So, you see, we were not likely to take absurd fancies into our heads—in the day-time, too.

As I said before, we took old White with us to look for a suitable ford, knowing that he was a first-rate hand in a river, and that as he had charge of the sheep on the island, and was in the habit of crossing two or three times every week, he was better acquainted with the river than any one on the station. As I wished to save my own horse at much as possible, I rode that buck-jumping thing of King's; so you may imagine I did not intend doing much in the river business, as you know his eccentric partiality for trying to drown people by rolling on them as soon as he gets into deep water.

We came to the river nearly where we crossed to-day; and, after trying several places without success, we found one which we thought would suit us; and Maxwell rode down alone to look at it, leaving us on the river bank. He had some distance to go, and, when he turned to go into the stream, was perhaps more than a quarter of a mile from where we stood. Then he had to ride for some little way along a narrow, shallow spit, where the water was just above his horse's knees, before he got to the deep part; but as there was nothing except a cabbage tree here and there between us and him, we had a very distinct view of his movements.

I was talking to Wright, and, as we were anxious to get back to the station before sunset, had just asked him what time it was. I remember he said that it was ten minutes past three, when White started, and turning round, said suddenly—

"Wha' can that body be, Maister Kennedy, that's walking forenainst Maister Maxwell?"

I could see Maxwell as plainly as I see you; but there was no one else to be seen, and I said so to White; but the old man seemed to be surprised at my thinking him mistaken.

"Hoots, mon!—dinna ye see him wi' his haund on Bob's mane? Ye maun be bleend, mon," persisted he. And turning to Wright, he added, "Can ye no see him, Maister Wright? He's just walking along wi' Maister Maxwell, wi' the water rinnin' ower his knees. He's gotten some kind o' dark claithes on; but I dinna ken him, and I'm sure he's no ain o' our folk."

Of course I thought it was a cabbage tree he saw, and tried to persuade him that it was so; but he insisted that it was a man he saw, and kept wondering that we could not see him also, and making remarks about his movements.

"Noo they are getting mair intil the thick o' the stream, and he has taen holt o' Maister Maxwell's stirrup leather, and the water is getting unco deep for him, and he—ech! Lord, mon, he's doon under the water, and Maister Maxwell has'na missed him frae his side, for he does na' turn his head. Preserve us—he'll be drowned!"

And so saying, he galloped off to where Maxwell was, leaving Wright and I amazed, and half inclined to think he had gone mad.

Presently, Maxwell and he returned to where we were. Never, as long as I live, shall I forget White's face at that moment. His lips were as white as a sheet, and his eyes were almost starting out of his head with horror and fear; and when he tried to speak, although his lips moved, no sound came from them. Maxwell, too, looked puzzled.

"What is all this White has got into his head about seeing a man with me in the river? I don't understand what he means, and can't make him out," he said.

I told him what White had said, and how positive he had been about seeing the man. We talked it over, and of course agreed that it was nothing but fancy; but I don't think, to tell the truth, any of us felt very comfortable. Still, we laughed at White, and this had the good effect of bringing him round to himself again; but we could not get him to say it might be imagination, and he remained as positive as ever that he had seen some one.

"I'll no jist say it was a leevin' mon, but I ken fine I saw something, and may be it micht be a wraith," the old man said; and then, turning to me, added, in quite a beseeching tone, "dinna ye hae onything to do wi' crossing that reever the noo, Maister Kennedy; for wha' kens but it micht hae been for a warning;" and he looked so solemn and serious that I really felt half inclined to take his advice.

Next morning we started early with the horses. White was to have given us a helping hand over the river; but he positively refused to do so, and we had to leave him at home. Maxwell came; and after we had

crossed, I rode back with him to the river side, getting directions about selling the horses.

Just as I had said good-bye, and was turning to leave him, he cried out—

"Good heavens, Pat, what is that lying in the water? It looks like the body of a man."

And there, sure enough, close by the spot where White said he saw the man disappear the day before, lay the body of a man, in a dark blue shirt and dark trousers, cold and dead, with its poor white bleached face turned up to Heaven, and the current trickling over it, and waving the hair, and giving it a ghastly and mocking appearance of life which I shall never forget, and which often haunts me still. Some days afterwards we learnt that on the same day, and at what must have been the same hour, that old White declared he saw the man swept away, a man was drowned when trying to ford the river on foot some miles farther up the stream.

Kennedy stopped speaking, and for some minutes no one broke the silence. There was not much in Pat's tale, except that it was true, and told on the spot where it happened, and that we were sitting round a small flickering fire surrounded by a heavy darkness impenetrable as eternity, with no sound to break the silence but the distant and wavering rush of the river, and now and then the sudden startling screech of the "weeka" or native hen; and perhaps it is due to these circumstances that it made so deep and lasting an impression on me.

"Well, Pat," said Charlie, after a few minutes, "I for one don't wonder at you for not being anxious to remain here another night; so I vote for getting to sleep, and making an early start in the morning."

"Do you know what has become of White?" I asked.

"Yes," said Pat, "I do. Soon after he saw the 'ghost,' he left Maxwell, and went home to his native village. Somehow he could not settle there, and I believe he went back to Victoria again. One thing is certain, he does not intend coming back here again."

"I think, Pat, you deserve the thanks of this meeting for giving us your experience in the spirit line, for it has helped to pass away the time."

"What do you say if we each give our several experiences at night," observed Bill; "and, as I have no doubt you wonder how it was that Stevens found me in such a plight in Dunedin, I don't mind following Pat's lead, and twisting you my yarn tomorrow; that is to say, if you care to listen to it."

"That's the best idea I have heard from you, Bill," replied Stevens, "and I agree to add my mite; but as I never had much of an adventure that I remember at present, you must expect to be bored on my night."

"And I promise to do my best also," I added, "although that won't be a lot, I fear. So now I'm off to the dreamy land of Nod. Good night."

WHAT A FLOWER DID FOR ME.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—II.

THE hearty old baronet and his lady stood on the steps to welcome us, with two lovely girls in the zenith of their beauty by their side. They were introduced to me by Bob as his sisters; and their charming *naïveté* and vivacity speedily wore away my usual shyness, so that in the course of half an hour I felt perfectly at home in their society.

I well remember my first dinner at Charwood: the oak panelled old dining-room, with its old-fashioned bay windows looking out on the spacious lawn and peaceful mere, in whose depths the early stars were already beginning to twinkle. I remember, too, the quaint old portraits on the walls, where many a knight in chain armour, and fair dames in ruffs and farthingale, looked calmly down on the company. The whole scene; the witching softness of the hour (too light for candles); the silvery laughter of fair women, and the glances shot at me from dark eyes over the barriers of green sprays and lovely flowers; the delicious odour that filled the air; the rich jovial voice of Sir Robert, and the ring of his mellow laugh—all these combine to fix that calm July evening indelibly on my memory. That evening was the precursor of many happy days in this hospitable mansion, all of whose inmates vied with each other in making my visit a pleasant one. Our life was the usual routine of old country houses. The long summer day was passed in fishing or boating on the mere; in delightful

picnics in the grand old woods; in sketching the picturesque scenery. Occasionally Bob and I would vary matters by driving to the neighbouring town of B— (about eight miles distant); but these visits were rare, as in those burning days there was nothing like the cool shade and perfect repose of the thick woods. Occasional visitors came for the day, and left the next morning. So we had no lack of society. Two provokingly good-looking fellows especially, the one the son of a Devonshire squire, and the other a captain in the Guards, had evidently made a dead set at the baronet's daughters, and came rather oftener, perhaps, than I liked. Not that I was *jealous* of them exactly, for I saw too plainly that they were masters of the field, and that I had no chance (even had I been so inclined) of winning either the handsome Marian, or the fairylike Cecile; but their arrival broke up abruptly many a delightful *tête-à-tête*, and one likes to monopolise the society of pretty women, even though "la belle passion" does not enter into the affair at all!

I had been at Charwood nearly a month, when Lady Crawford came up to me one bright August morning, as I was enjoying my early pipe under a magnificent acacia tree in the shrubbery.

"I have news for you, Mr. Alwyne," she said, in her pleasant voice. "Something is about to happen here which, I trust, will materially increase your enjoyment; but don't be curious," she added, seeing I was about to speak, "for I don't mean to tell you what it is till evening, when you will probably solve the mystery for yourself!"

"My dear Lady Crawford," I said, hesitatingly, "no words of mine can express my appreciation of your kindness since I have been your guest, and I need not say how loath I shall be to leave Charwood; but I fear"—here I looked rather foolish—"my visit is being prolonged to an unconscionable length; in fact, I—"

"Make no more apologies, for you are pledged to Charwood for the next three weeks at least," she said, laughingly, "and I will not let you off an hour sooner."

So saying, she gave me a pleasant nod and left me.

The whole of that day I passed in a state of restless agitation. Bob had gone away for a few days, and the young ladies were spending the day with some friends a few

miles off, whilst the worthy baronet had gone to the neighbouring town to attend the quarter sessions, of which he was chairman. Consequently, as Lady Crawford kept to her own rooms the best part of the day, I had Charwood and its many beauties pretty much to myself, though I fear they were all thrown away on such a restless, impatient being as I proved myself that Thursday—for I well remember even the day of the week. After Lady Crawford had gone, I wandered listlessly through the grounds; thence I strolled to one of the deep old ponds embedded in the picturesque woods, and fished for carp for an hour without a nibble; thence I repaired to the stables, and listened to the talk of the grooms. Then came lunch, when Lady Crawford appeared with a malicious twinkle in her eye, as I thought, and an air of mystery about her altogether, that only served to whet my curiosity still more, and made me long right earnestly for seven o'clock, when the secret would be disclosed. I passed the long, bright afternoon in one of our usual haunts, trying to read, though my eye ever wandered from the pages of my book to the patches of blue sky seen through the branches overhead, as though I could solve the riddle—for such it was to me—there. Sir Robert and the girls were to return before dinner, so Lady Crawford had told me; so I strolled towards the house, hoping to be able to elicit the key to the mystery from either father or daughters. But I was disappointed. Sir Robert was riding up the avenue as I approached. But in reply to my eager inquiries he only laughed, declaring that *he* knew of no mystery at all; that Lady Crawford had been having some fun with me, &c., &c., and much more in the same strain; till, in despair, I betook myself to the young ladies, who had returned half an hour before.

But I fared worse with them than with their father; and at length, fairly vanquished by their merciless teasing, I beat a retreat to my own chamber, and prepared to dress for dinner.

THE SHAM-SAMPLE SWINDLE.

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

SIR—The above literary fraud was first exposed and named in your pages—No. 34, New Series, August 22nd, 1868. I shall feel obliged if you will strike it another

blow, by inserting a letter that has been suppressed, yet misrepresented, in the *Athenæum*, Jan. 18:—

THE SHAM-SAMPLE SWINDLE.

SIR CHARLES DILKE—The above fraud is worked as follows:—The Detractor takes an exceptional passage from a meritorious work, cites it in full, and then slyly suggests that the whole work is of that character. This fraud can never fail to deceive, because the little bit of truth is presented to the senses, the enormous lie is hidden from them. Having exposed, dissected, branded, and, above all, named this fraud, I hoped I had done with it; but I find I had only scotched the reptile: it is at me again in the *Athenæum*, Jan. 4, and this time with defamatory suggestions, which compel me either to sue you for libel, or to test your character as a gentleman, by an appeal to your honour and humanity. I take the latter course.

A Pseudonymuncle, said to be in the pay of your Weekly, pretends that he is an outside correspondent, and his initials are "C. F."; and he alleges that he has got a house, and that "The Wandering Heir" was brought to it—by the wind, or by some one who said, "Slander me now this tale"?—and that he opened this tale at random, and, being familiar with Swift, fell at once on a passage he recognized as adapted from verses by Swift; and—being not familiar with Swift—is convinced the whole story, or the bulk of it, is adapted from the same source, and any fool could write it; which implies he could write it himself, and so places me at the bottom of the human intellect.

One would think this was enough. Yet he proceeds to indelicacy, and from that to libel. He undertakes to say, without giving his authority—some printer's devil probably—that I am paid for this tale by the line, or by the word, or in some form that makes every word I have taken from Swift a commercial injustice to my publishers.

Now, sir, I am an old gentleman, honourably connected with Letters; you are a young gentleman, honourably connected with Letters. A Pseudonymuncle has not a character to lose, nor a name that can be lowered; but you and I have both. It is to you, therefore, I must appeal to reconsider this insult. In all my long experience, nothing so utterly snobbish, as the above insinuation, has ever been published about an

author and a gentleman in a respectable Weekly. What! is a writer, who would not be admitted to my kitchen, far less to my confidence, to be allowed to tell the public, in your columns, that he knows, or thinks he knows, how I treat with my publishers, and to found on that indelicate conjecture a lie, which is a libel?

I feel sure that on reflection you will be sorry anything so unworthy of you has crept—perhaps in your absence—into the Weekly of which you are proprietor, vendor, and editor; and, as I shall expect some expressions of gentleman-like regret from you, I hereby give you the material. Writers of my stamp are not paid, like Pseudonymuncle, by the line: my contract with the proprietors of the *Graphic* was for a fixed sum; but the bulk was not determined. Of course there was a minimum fixed; but they were liberal on their side, and I, who am an artist, and not a mere trader, gave them *nine columns over the minimum*.

My literal use of Swift, honestly examined, is about twenty lines. What becomes of the charge that I take money for every word, and sell Swift's words for Reade's?

You will, I am sure, withdraw this insinuation. The writer has little personal claim on you; for observe, if he is "C. F." in *Athenæum*, January 4, he is "Cæcilius" in the *Press*, January 4, and a trickster and a scurrilous skunk in both. I send you his article in the *Press*, that you may see from how unscrupulous a mind comes that libel in your own columns, which I hope you will now disapprove; and, in that hope, I proceed to correct the mere intellectual detraction with good temper. It is founded on two things—1. The sham-sample swindle, which I have defined. 2. On a pardonable blunder.

The blunder is one into which many criticasters of my day have fallen; but a critic is more scientific, more discriminating. The scientific critic knows there is a vital distinction between taking ideas from a homogeneous source, and from a heterogeneous source; and that only the first-mentioned of these two acts is plagiarism: the latter is more like jewel-setting. Call it what you like, it is not plagiarism.

I will take the fraud and the blunder in order, and illustrate them by a few examples, out of thousands.

By the identical process Pseudonymuncle has used to entrap your readers into

believing "The Wandering Heir" a mere plagiarism, one could prove the following positions:—

1. That the Old Testament is a mere Holywell-street production, and ought to be instantly indicted under Campbell's Act, and suppressed.
2. That the miracles of Jesus Christ are none of them the miracles of a God, nor even of a benevolent man—Giving water intoxicating qualities, when the guests had drunk enough, Lord knows; cursing a fig tree; driving pigs to a watery grave. This is how Voltaire works the sham-sample swindle, and gulls Frenchmen that let him read the Bible for them.
3. That Virgil never wrote a line he did not take from Lucretius, or somebody.
4. That Milton the Poet is *all* Homer, Euripides, and an Italian play called "Adam in Paradise."
5. That Molière is all Plautus and Cyran de Bergerac, "et prend *tout* son bien on il le trouve."
6. That the same Molière never writes grammatical French.
7. That Shakspeare is *all* Plautus, Horace, Hollingshed, Belleforest, and others.
8. That Corneille had not an idea he did not steal from Spain.
9. That Scott has not an original incident in all his works.
10. That five Italian operas are all English and Irish music.
11. That the overture to "Guillaume Tell" is all composed by Swiss shepherds.
12. That "Robinson Crusoe" is a mere theft from Woodes Rogers, and Dampier.

Not one of these is a greater lie, and few of them are as great lies, as to call "The Wandering Heir" a plagiarism from Swift.

Now for the blunder. That will be best corrected by putting examples of jewel-setting, and examples of plagiarism, cheek by jowl.

Corneille's "Horaces," a tragedy founded on a heterogeneous work—viz., an historical narrative by Livy—is not plagiarism. His "Cid," taken from a Spanish play, is plagiarism. Shakspeare's "Comedy of Errors," and Molière's "Avare," are plagiarisms both from Plautus. Shakspeare's "Macbeth," taken from a heterogeneous work, a chronicle, is no plagiarism, though he uses a much larger slice of Hollingshed's dialogue than I have taken from Swift, and follows his ori-

ginal more closely. The same applies to his "Coriolanus." This tragedy is not a plagiarism; for Plutarch's life of Coriolanus is a heterogeneous work; and the art with which the great master uses and versifies Volumnia's speech, as he got it from North's translation of Plutarch, is jewel-setting, not plagiarism. By the same rule, "Robinson Crusoe," though Defoe sticks close to Woodes Rogers, and Dampier, in many particulars of incident and reflection, is not a plagiarism, being romance founded on books of fact. The distinction holds good as to single incidents, or short and telling speeches. Scott's works are literally crammed with diamonds of incident and rubies of dialogue, culled from heterogeneous works, histories, chronicles, ballads, and oral traditions. But this is not plagiarism—it is jewel-setting. Byron's famous line—

"The graves of those who cannot die,"

is a plagiarism from another poet, Crabbe; but Wolsey's famous distich, in Shakspeare's "Henry the Eighth," is not a plagiarism from Wolsey: it is an historical jewel set in a heterogeneous work, and set as none but a great inventor ever yet set a fact-jewel.

And, to compare small things with great—since science is never so great, so just, so scientific, as when she applies her equal laws to things identical in kind, though differing in degree—Swift's verses are not fictitious narrative, but a photograph, painting the inner life of many Dublin ladies at an epoch long gone by; and I—desirous, as an artist, to give touches of true colour to my invention—did well to set that jewel in my *heterogeneous work*, and therein was not a plagiarist, but followed the highest and noblest masters of fiction in a distinct branch of their art.

Fiction is not lying: or Pseudonymuncula would really find it as easy as they pretend. Let any man look into Fiction scientifically, for a change, and he will find all fiction worth a button is founded on fact; and it matters less, than the unscientific suppose, whether those facts are gathered by personal experience, or by hearsay, or from the experiences of others, as recorded in manuscripts or printed records of fact. I have used one of Swift's experiences of real life; but please observe under what circumstances. The inner life of Irish people in 1726—40 is a matter so inaccessible and recondite, that Macaulay was in open de-

spair over it; and, unfortunately for me, Froude's researches were not yet public. When I write of my own day, I have three great sources—experience, memory, and print; but, in writing "The Wandering Heir," I had but one source. Then, either I must do as the vulgar novelists do, drift into reckless blundering, and present for the eighteenth century the nineteenth century daubed with "Foregad," and "Pshaw," or I must take the scholar's way, and labour hard, grope as only scholars can, and put my labour to some profit. I took the scholar's way—I ransacked Dublin for old records; I raked out things even Macaulay missed; I gemmed my tale with many a recondite jewel of fact, and I used *one solitary passage* from so common a writer as Swift; but then that passage was a gem. I used it without disguise. I positively invited my readers to read Swift. The invitation was noticed in the *Athenæum* of December 27; and, shuffling apart, it was that very invitation sent the Pseudonymuncle to Swift. December 27, I was accused in the *Athenæum* of showing off my learning; and January 4, of disguising it.

Some things, Sir, can never be judged without their alternatives. Suppose I had not used that photograph of an Irish lady's life, what trash should I have written out of the depths of my inner consciousness? It was Swift, or lies; for that phase of Irish life he photographs has left no other trace. No, Sir, to set this unique jewel of truth in my heterogeneous work was no crime, intellectual or moral. My only crime is this: I have written too well. Invention, labour, research, and, above all, a close condensation, to be found in few other living English novelists, all these qualities combined have produced a strong, yet finite, story, which has fallen like a little thunderbolt among the "contes à dormir debout" of garrulous mediocrity. This is the crime that has made Pseudonymuncle writhe with envy, and so boil with rage, that your Weekly did not suffice to his hot hate; he must insult me, *on the same day*, in a Weekly (*sic*) that is dying for a kick from me, and will have to die without that honour. My real crime, I say, is indicated in certain lines from the *Times* newspaper, which deserve immortality. Please rescue them from unjust oblivion:—

"There is no vice of which a man can be guilty, no shabbiness, no wickedness,

which excites so much indignation amongst his contemporaries, as his success. This is the unpardonable crime, which reason cannot defend, nor humility mitigate.

'When Heaven with such parts has blest him,
Have I not reason to detest him?'

is a genuine and natural expression of the vulgar mind. The man who labours as we cannot labour, speaks as we cannot speak, writes as we cannot write, and thrives as we cannot thrive, has accumulated in his own person all the offences of which a man can be guilty. Down with him! why cumbereth he the ground?"

I am, Sir—with thanks for your courtesy and politeness in inserting so long a letter—your faithful servant,

CHARLES READE.

TABLE TALK.

THE one topic of conversation for a week has been the death of the ex-Emperor, Napoleon III., at Camden Place, Chislehurst. The daily papers have given in their columns, from day to day, the most minute details of events occurring at Chislehurst, and they have been eagerly read by a sympathizing public. In death, all honour has been shown to him who, in life, was the steady friend of the English people. Napoleon the Third has been laid in the tomb with something better than the pomp and show of kingly state—the sincere grief of friends, the honest sympathy of a multitude of people of several nations. It now remains to estimate the probable political consequences of the death of one who was once master of France and almost arbiter of the destinies of Europe. In our next number we shall print an article giving a brief memoir of the third head of the Imperial House of Bonaparte, and an estimate of the results to France and Europe likely to follow upon his death.

MR. CHARLES READE AND HIS LAST CRITIC.

MR. CHARLES READE—as all the world knows, because all the world has read it—has just written for the *Graphic* one of the most charming stories possible, almost as charming as "Peg Woffington." Mr. Somebody Else, whom probably the world does not know, has just found a tremendous mare's-nest about it, and has been spreading his wings and cackling over it through two

long columns of the *Athenæum*. This is his wonderful discovery:—Mr. Reade proposed to himself, in writing "The Wandering Heir," a different plan to that followed by most historical novelists. He actually tries to represent his characters, not only dressed in eighteenth century costume, but talking, thinking, and acting with eighteenth century ideas. It may be surprising to the *Athenæum* correspondent, but that is what Mr. Reade proposed to do. And in order to do it, he turned to account his reading of the literature of the period; and when he has to describe a party of fashionable ladies at cards, he takes Swift's "Journal of a Modern Lady," which every schoolboy knows, and pictures just such another said party as that of Swift's. Moreover, in the conversations of the ladies, Mr. Reade, as the mare's-nest critic discovers, has actually reproduced at least a dozen lines of the great Dean's own words. Here is a precious to-do! We look at each other in amazement. None of our immortal works are safe, then. Here is a man who is actually capable of putting into the mouths of his characters some of the best-known lines in the English language, without acknowledging them. Next he will be taking the Church Catechism, or some other equally familiar work, and making Celia, or Philip, or Jack try to pass it off as his own. Seriously, it seems to me that the editor of the *Athenæum* has made a great mistake in allowing this most ridiculous letter to appear in his highly respectable paper. If you are to throw your time back two hundred years, you have no other way possible but to use the literature of the period. Mr. Reade has gone to the best, and best known, writers of the time. He takes a poem with which every student of English literature, even the most superficial, is perfectly familiar—one about which the word plagiarism could not possibly be employed—and transmutes it, by the power of his genius, to serve the purposes of his prose. But the scene is Reade's, not Swift's; and it is the merest captiousness to object to the use of a few lines which everybody knows are Swift's, but which fit perfectly with the context. Of course, the question involved is a large one—no other than the right of using the literature of the past. To me it is evident that in no other way can an historical novel, or a novel of bygone times, be written at all;

unless—as in "Romola"—you are content to give your characters nineteenth century ideas and fifteenth century dresses. The *Athenæum* writer remarks at the close—it is exactly what one would expect him to remark—that "if this is how novels are made, surely novel-writing must be an easy art." Very easy indeed. You want nothing but a few years of hard and patient labour, and then—like a spoonful of salt in your soup—just a pinch of genius. But I have got a proposition to make to the finder of mares'-nests. If he has not read "The Cloister and the Hearth," I will sketch the plot—i.e., the life of Gerard—for him. I will give him the works of Erasmus and Rabelais, with the whole corpus of early French novelettes, the table talk of Luther, the poems of Clement Marot, and any other books of the period he may wish to read. I will then furnish him with a bundle of quill pens, and a ream of paper, and invite him to write, from these materials—the same as those used by Charles Reade—a rival novel to "The Cloister and the Hearth." Or, if that would take too long, let him, with Pope, Swift, Addison, and Steele at his elbow, be good enough to give the world a novelette. He will find it "very easy," I have not the least doubt, to equal Mr. Charles Reade; and when it is done, I have also not the least doubt that the editor of the *Graphic* will give him, too, a chance of pleasing the quarter of a million people who have bought "The Wandering Heir." Other portions of the works of Swift might be read by the *Athenæum* critic to good purpose, particularly a few lines—he will easily find them—such as the following—

"We all behold with envious eyes,
Our equals raised above our size.
Who would not at a crowded show
Stand high himself, keep others low?
What poet would not grieve to see
His brother write as well as he?
But rather than they should excel,
Would wish his rivals all in hell?
Her end when Emulation misses,
She turns to envy, stings, and hisses.
I have no title to aspire—
Yet, when you sink I seem the higher."

[The foregoing note was in type before we received Mr. Charles Reade's communication. After having received it, we see no reason to omit our own remarks from our present issue.]

So much has lately been said about flogging at schools, that we will not pass over

this note on the subject from a correspondent, who writes to us about certain salient points in the story now appearing in our columns. "I was rather struck with Hartley Venn's remarks on the birch—p. 532, ONCE A WEEK, December 21st. I am inclined to take his remarks *au sérieux*. I do believe that, the unhappy necessity for punishing boys being admitted, 'the older and more classical instrument is the least brutalizing, the least degrading.' Surely, it is the safest. We must have all heard stories of boys seriously injured by other forms of violence. And who can affirm but that many more occur than come to the public ear? Permanent deafness or stupidity may be the lifelong consequences of ear-boxing, head-rapping, &c. Yet how common these things are—or, at all events, were. And I should really like to know whether more practical persons than the amiable doctrinaire, Venn, would not plead for the birch, and nothing but the birch. One or two singular anecdotes I have heard rather confirm his view." It only remains for us to state that the authors did not intend Mr. Hartley Venn's remarks to be taken seriously. Venn himself would have been the last person in the world to flog a boy, or advocate birching in earnest; and his sentiments on the subject are ours.

IT IS FROM the *Albany Law Journal*, an able representative of the legal profession in America, that we gather the opinion that there "is a vast deal of what is popularly believed to be law to be found in novels other than those of Justinian. Indeed, a novel can hardly be regarded as orthodox that does not either turn upon or culminate in a law-suit, or at least introduce one as a kind of side show. But this romance-law is quite as apt to be unlike anything to be found in the 'books' as some of the characters are apt to be unlike any found in everyday life." That the law of novels is bad, we admit; for if we do not, the exceptions will be quoted against us, to prove the rule. At the suggestion of the editor of the *Law Journal*, the authors of "Ready-money Mortiboy" made an important alteration in the law of that novel. In Mr. Samuel Warren's "Ten Thousand a Year," his Lord Chief Justice decided that an ancient deed was not admissible in evidence *because* it contained an erasure. Yet Warren was a lawyer, Scott was a lawyer, but he made oc-

casional mistakes in the law of his novels. Charles Reade, says the *Albany Law Journal*, is not a lawyer; but "he pretends, like Bulwer Lytton, to have the written opinion of a lawyer (for which he says he pays—an important point) on all legal matters introduced by him in his stories. If this be so, his counsel must be of a very cheap order, for he occasionally makes an absurd error." These errors, if errors they are, are then pointed out. We now quote them at length. The conclusion arrived at we concur in entirely. It is thus expressed:—"While this profane novel-law may do no particular harm, it displays a slovenliness or ignorance on the part of story-writers which is inexcusable. It is by no means required that one who undertakes to be a novelist should first learn law. But if, in writing his novel, he desires to touch upon the law, he is then as much bound to acquaint himself with it—to state it correctly—as he is to acquaint himself with the passions and actions of individuals. No one in an English company is bound to speak French; but if he does, and speaks it incorrectly, he is justly the subject of ridicule. So, no story-writer is obliged to make the law a part of his plot; and if he does, he is much to be censured if he does not do it with a great degree of correctness. His duty is to 'hold the mirror up to nature,' and to show 'every age and body of the time, his form and pressure.'" This is what every artist in words tries to do; and we believe no English novelist of eminence introduces legal points into his story without first obtaining the opinion of counsel as to the soundness of the law he makes use of. Our American friends hardly expect every trashy tale that gets into print to be sounder in law than it is in grammar and taste. All will be shaky, of necessity. English novelists, we know, have done their best to be correct in the points of law they introduce; and the American novelists we cannot commit to the care of better hands than the writers of the journal from which we have made these quotations.

Contributions should be legibly written, and only on one side of each leaf.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

ONCE A WEEK

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No. 266.

February 1, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.
CHAPTER XIII.



WORLD and the two worlds of the "boys," as she called them, were all three wide enough apart.

Woman-like, she tried to bring them into her own groove, and began by asking them to dinner. Arthur went with a sort of enthusiasm. The queenly beauty and the imperiousness of the young lady—so great a contrast to his own shrinking indecision—fired his imagination. In her he saw something of what he himself might have been but for his fatal shyness. Philip went too, at first unwillingly, but presently with a pleasure which astonished him. His pastime seemed to be to rouse the spirit of antagonism in Madeleine; and he delighted to rouse her to wrath by opposing to her enthusiasm the cold barrier of cynical selfishness.

"If it were not," she said one night, "if it were not that I know you exaggerate your opinions, I should hate you."

"Do not hate me," Philip answered; "because hatred is an active passion. I dislike a lot of people, but I never take the trouble to hate anybody—not even a bore."

"Then do not talk as if self was the only thing in the world."

"I must, Madeleine, if I talk at all. You would not have silence at your table, would you? And Arthur never says anything. Arthur has made a wonderful discovery, which is going to cover him with glory? Has he told you?"

"No. What is it, Arthur?"

Arthur blushed vividly.

"It is only a point of archæological interest," he said. "There has been a dispute in the Archæological Institute for years about the number of buttons that went to the shirt of mail, and I have at last been enabled to settle the question."

"There," said Philip, triumphantly, "what did I tell you?"

Madeleine sighed. It seemed to her so sad that one of the boys should openly worship self, and the other should fritter away his time in the pursuit of useless knowledge.

In the course of the evening she delivered an animated oration on the subject, while Mrs. Longworthy slumbered by the fire. The boys stood before her, each in his turn receiving punishment: Philip enjoying it above all things, and Arthur, because he saw that she was in earnest, with blushes and shame.

"It is all true, Madeleine, every word," he said.

"So it is," said Philip. "We are a disgraceful pair."

"You are the worst, Philip, by far," went on the fair preacher; "when I look at you, and think what you might be doing—"

"See, now, Madeleine," Philip said; "tell us exactly what we can do, and we will have a try at it. The care of other people may

possibly have a charm in it which is unknown to us at present. Who knows? I may yet be preaching on a tub, while Arthur collects halfpence in his hat. I fancy I see him now."

"You turn everything serious into ridicule," said Madeleine.

"Seriously," Arthur said, "my life is wasted. I suppose antiquarian research is useless to the world. I am afraid, however, I shall never quite give it up. What can I do? Do you want money for your objects, Madeleine?"

"No—no—no," she replied impatiently. "How often am I to tell you that the real work of charity is done without money? Now, listen, and I will tell you what a man of leisure should do. It is the interest of everybody that the condition of the poor should be raised;—by schools, by giving them instruction in the arts of life, by giving them sufficient wages for good work, by maintaining their self-respect."

Philip began to groan softly.

"I will come to what I mean most." She blushed a little, and went on:—"I have got a friend, a middle-aged woman, who gives all her life to the care of a certain house, where she receives and finds work for women. We give them as much work as they can do, at a fair price. We ask no questions—we form no society. Some of them live in the house; others in the neighbourhood. We do not let them work all day, and we give them instruction in housework, in medicine, and all sorts of things that may be useful to them when they marry, as most of them do."

"I suppose," said Philip, the irrepresible, "they are driven to church three times every Sunday."

"Not at all. We never interfere with their religion. Some of them are pious: some, I suppose, are not. We have one broad principle—that our work shall not be mixed up with religion in any way."

"Good."

"And what do you do with their work?"

"It goes to a shop which belongs to us. We can sell as cheaply as any other, in spite of our high wages; because, you see, there is no middle-man."

"Madeleine, you are a Radical."

"I know nothing about that. I am determined to do what I can to have women properly paid. All that come to me shall get work, even if we lose; though I think

we shall not lose by it, so long as I have any money left. Now, you two can help me."

"I never learned to sew," said Philip, looking at his fingers.

"The girls and women have got brothers and sons. We cannot find work for them too, but we want to get up a night school. Will you come down and teach?"

They looked at each other with alarm.

"Of course we will," said Arthur, "if you wish it."

"Then come to-morrow."

They went.

It was in Westminster that Madeleine's "house" stood: properly speaking, three or four small houses knocked into one. They went with her at seven o'clock, both feeling horribly ill at ease.

She took them upstairs into a room made out of two by taking down the wall between, where a dozen boys were assembled, under the care of a young man whose pale cheeks and thin figure concealed a vast amount of courage and enthusiasm. With him—a young martyr to the cause which yearly kills its soldiers—we have here nothing to do.

"This is our school," said Madeleine. "Mr. Hughes, these two gentlemen will try to do something for us—if you will put them in the way."

Mr. Hughes bowed—but looked suspiciously at his two new assistants.

"Come, gentlemen," he said, "there are your pupils—the more advanced boys. Mine are down below."

He divided the boys into two sets, one at either end; giving Philip care of one and Arthur that of the other.

"You will be firm, gentlemen," he whispered. "Don't let any single step be taken to destroy discipline. We have to be very careful here. Here are books for you."

He gave Philip a geography, and Arthur a little book containing hints or lectures on all sorts of elementary subjects, chiefly connected with laws of health, rules of life, and of simple chemical laws. Arthur sat down mechanically, and turned pale when he opened the book; for of science he was as ignorant as the Pope himself. In a few moments Philip came over to him.

"What have you got, Arthur?"

"Here's science—what am I to do with it?"

"I don't know. I've got geography. What am I to do with that?"

"Draw a map on a board, and tell them something about a country. Anything will do."

Philip went back and faced his class. They were a sturdy, dirty-faced lot of young *gamins*, all whispering together, and evidently intent on as much mischief as could be got out of the new teacher. Behind him was a black board and a piece of chalk.

"What country shall we take, boys?" he asked, with an air of confidence, as if all were alike to him.

"Please, sir, yesterday we had Central Africa, and Mr. Hughes told us a lot about travellers there. Let's have some more about Livingstone."

Philip was not posted up in Livingstone. He shook his head, and tried to think of a country he knew something about. Suddenly a bright thought struck him.

"Did you ever hear of Palmiste Island, boys?"

They never had.

"By Jove," thought Philip, "I shall get on splendidly now."

As he was drawing his map of the island, he heard Arthur, in a hesitating voice, beginning to describe the glory of the heavens; and nearly choked, because he was certain that five minutes would bring him to grief.

He began to talk as he drew his map, describing the discovery of the island, the first settlers, and their hardships; and then, warming to his subject, he told all about sugar making and coffee planting. From time to time, Arthur's voice fell upon his ear; but he was too busy drawing his map, and decorating the corners of the board with fancy sketches, illustrating the appearance of the people, niggers' heads, Chinese carrying pigs—for Phil sketched very fairly—and he did not look up. Presently he turned round. All Arthur's boys had deserted their instructor and come over to him, while their unhappy lecturer, in silence, sat helpless in his chair, his book in hand. As for his own boys, they were all on the broad grin, enjoying the lesson highly.

Philip stopped—

"I say," he said, "this won't do, you know. Go back, you boys, to your own end."

"He aint no good, that teacher," said one of the boys, with a derisive grin.

Arthur shook his head mournfully. There was something touching in his attitude, standing all alone, with his book in his hand. Per-

haps Arthur had never felt so humiliated in his life before. It was perfectly true: he was no good. In the brief five minutes during which he lectured, he made more mistakes in astronomical science than generally falls to the lot of man to make in a lifetime. Some of the boys, who had been to national schools, found him out in a moment, and openly expressed their contempt before seceding to the other end of the room.

"He aint no good, that teacher," said the boy. "You go on with your patter. We're a-listenin' to you. Draw us some more pictures. Make a white man latherin' a nigger."

"Obsairve," as a friend of ours would say, the instinctive superiority of race.

"Boys," said another, rising solemnly, "this one aint no good neither. He's a gammonin' of us. There aint no such a place. I sha'n't stay here to be gammoned on."

He was about four feet nothing in his boots, this young Hampden. Phil, cut to the heart by the ignominy of the thing, caught him a box of the ears that laid him sprawling. The urchin raised a howl, and, falling back among his friends, pulled the form over with him, so that the whole row of a dozen fell back together. The yells were terrific for a moment; and then, seized by a common impulse, the boys grasped their caps and fled down the stairs like one boy.

"Arthur!" said Philip.

"Philip!" said Arthur.

"You never experienced anything like this before, I suppose?"

"Never."

Just then Madeleine herself appeared, followed by Mr. Hughes. All the forms lay on the floor; for in the brief moment of tumult every boy had seized the opportunity of contributing something to the noise. And at either end of the room stood one of her new allies. Arthur, with his arms helplessly dangling, holding the unlucky book of science, Philip trying with his pocket-handkerchief to rub out some of the pictures.

Madeleine looked from one to the other.

"Take this wretched book, somebody," said Arthur, as if the volume chained him to the spot. "Do take the book."

Mr. Hughes took the book, and Arthur turned to Madeleine.

"It's a failure, Madeleine," he said, with a sad sigh. "They only laughed at me."

"And what have you been doing, Philip?"

"I've been getting on capitally," he said, trying to efface the pig and the Chinaman.

"I've been giving a lesson on geography."

"Illustrated," said Mr. Hughes, quietly, pointing to the pig.

"Yes, illustrated. I've been telling the boys about Palmiste, Madeleine; and they actually refused to believe there is any such place."

"Is much mischief done, Mr. Hughes?" asked Madeleine.

The question was like a box on the ear to both. They looked at each other, and Philip began to laugh.

"Honestly, Madeleine," he said, "I am very sorry. We have done our best. I thought we should have to hear a lesson, and was not prepared to give a lecture."

"Never mind, sir," said Mr. Hughes. "I dare say we shall soon mend matters; and perhaps your pictures amused the children."

"You may take me home, both of you," said Madeleine.

She said no more, though she was greatly disappointed at the failure of her scheme.

"Madeleine," said Philip, in the carriage, "I am inclined to think that, on the whole, I can serve my fellow-creatures best by not teaching them."

"Try me again, Madeleine," Arthur whispered.

CHAPTER XIV.

SETTLING down in most respectable lodgings, in Keppel-street, Russell-square, with a clear six months before him of no anxiety for the next day's dinner, Mr. MacIntyre felt at first more elation than becomes a philosopher. We must excuse him. When a man has had seven years of shifts, hardly knowing one day what the next would be like, racking his brain for contrivances to keep the wolf from the door, busy with never-ending combinations for the transference of cash from other people's pockets to his own, a clear holiday of six months seems almost like an eternity. So the poor rogue who spends three-fourths of his life in her Majesty's prisons, on getting his release leaps and drinks for joy, though conscious that before long the man in blue will again take care of him. Imagination does not yet present before his mind those well-remembered cells, that healthy labour, those light and wholesome meals. That is to come. After a few days of seclusion and whisky toddy,

Mr. MacIntyre awoke to the conclusion that something would have to be done. Reason once more asserted her sway. His first idea was to take pupils; and accordingly he invested a small sum in second-hand books, another in reports and examinations, and another sum in advertisements. No pupils came at all. Another thing he did was to go to a lawyer, and instruct him to write a certain letter to a firm of lawyers in Palmiste. They were directed to search the register of marriages at the church of St. Joseph for that of George Durnford with Marie; to make a formal and attested copy of it, and to send it to London—the whole being strictly secret and confidential.

And then, this being fairly put into hand, as he found he had a good deal of time upon his hands, he began to spend it chiefly in the society of Philip, watching him closely, getting his secrets out of him, communicating his opinions, trying to get a real influence over him.

"Obsairve," said the philosopher one night to Philip himself, "there are some kinds of men who go up hill or down hill, according as they are shoved. They have no deliberate choice in the matter; because, if they had, they would prefer the better path. While they are hesitating, some one comes and gives them a gentle shove downwards."

"What is the meaning of all this, MacIntyre?" asked Phil, ignorant of the application.

"Ay, ay—the wise man talks in parables, and is understood not. Ye've heard of Mr. Baxter, and his 'shove to heavy Christians,' Phil? He was a sagacious man. There may as well be shovers up as shovers down. I do what I can, but it's vara little—vara little, indeed. In me, my pupil, you behold an up-shover; in yourself—one who is shoved upwards."

In his easy way, having very few friends and long leave, Philip fell back a good deal on MacIntyre. First, the man amused him; then he took pleasure in his company, because he flattered him; thirdly, he fell into the snares of a will stronger than his own, and confided everything to him. MacIntyre, not by any means a deep, designing villain, had yet a game of his own to play. He read the character of his ex-pupil, and began to consider his own plans almost as good as carried out.

"See," he seemed to say, while he and

Philip sat opposite each other in the evening, smoking and talking—"see how goodly are the fruits in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. Let me give you a friendly shove in that direction. Obsairve, how sickly is the perfume—how faint the odour of the Jericho rose. Truly, the apples of the plain are better than the grapes of Eshcol. I have been myself, all my life, in search of these fruits; unsuccessfully, I admit, through no fault of mine. For I had no scruples. I fought for my own hand. I was a beggar born; and, because circumstances were too strong for me, I am a beggar now, at fifty-three. But mine is the true road, and your philosopher knows no scruples."

Phil's secrets were simple. The young fellow was in debt, of course, but not badly. More than half his little fortune was gone. He had a heavy balance against him on the year's racing. Worse than this, he was in love.

All these things considered together, Mr. MacIntyre was perhaps justified in rubbing his hands at night. What did he do, though, with those two or three bits of yellow paper which he was always reading, holding to the light, and examining, before he put them up again in the dirty old pocket-book which he carried inside his waistcoat?

"I think," he murmurs, "that in three months, or six at least, it may be done. It shall be done. The pear will be ripe. Bah! it must drop into my hands."

He talked over the love matter. That was the most pressing business.

"Ye cannot do it, Phil," he said—"it's beneath yourself."

"Nonsense," said Philip, colouring. "I can make no *misalliance*."

"Pardon me, you can. And if you knew all . . . Obsairve, young man, he who—"

"I know, I know. Do not philosophize. I suppose you cannot imagine such a thing as love, MacIntyre?"

"No, I think not. I've been married, though; so I know very well what is *not* love."

"I believe you have been everything," said Philip.

"Most things I certainly have. And most things I have made notes of. As, for instance, that the British officer does not, as a rule, marry the girl of inferior position whom—"

"MacIntyre, stop!" cried Philip. "Do not try me too far. I have been a gambler, if you like—a profligate—anything you like to call me; but I swear that I have never had that sin laid to my conscience."

"Aweel, aweel," said MacIntyre. "Was I tempting you? You apply a general proposition to a particular case. A most illogical race the English always were."

He changed the subject; but kept on recurring to it, night after night; while Philip, meeting Laura but once a week or so, was daily growing more and more passionately in love with the girl.

"A marriage beneath your station, Philip," he said one night, enigmatically, "would be madness to you, just now."

"And why just now?"

"Because you will have to take your proper place; give up the soldiering, and become a country gentleman—that is, as soon as you like to hold out your hand and ask."

"What is the man talking about?"

"Never mind—we can wait. Mind, I say nothing about the young leddy."

"She is too good for me."

"Na doot—na doot. They always are. She's all that you imagine, of course, and more behind it. But after a month, ye'd wish ye hadn't done it. Eh, what a pity, that there is nothing short of marriage! Hand-fasting would be something."

It was the second time he had thrown out this hint. This time, Philip did *not* spring from his chair. He only looked at him thoughtfully, and shook his head.

"I must have her, MacIntyre—I must have her. Only this morning I saw her. See, here is a lock of her pretty hair. How soft it is, the dear little lock that I cut off with her own scissors! And here is her face in my locket. Look at it—you, with your fifty years of cold philosophy, and warm your blood for a moment. Think of what you would have been, if you had met her when you were young, when you were five and twenty! Eh, Mephistopheles? Did you ever have any youth?"

"I'll tell you about my youth some other day," returned the preceptor—"not now. Well, it's a bonny face, a bonny face; and a good face, too."

"By Heaven, sir," Philip went on, "there's no woman like her—not one."

"There is none like her, none, Nor shall be till our summers have deceased."

You know, you know—

“ ‘Her sweet voice ringing up to the sunny sky,
Till I well could weep for myself, so wretched
and mean,
And a lover so sordid and base.’ ”

It isn't quite right: but never mind. I feel the touch of her fingers in mine this moment, man of the icy veins. I tell you that I feel the warm blush on her cheek when I kissed her; I hear the sweet tones of her voice—the loveliest and sweetest you ever heard. And she trusts me,” he went on, with a sort of sob—“she trusts me, and thinks I am good. Good! She is not happy with the secret, poor child. She longs to tell this Mr. Venn, who is a friend of Arthur's, all about it.”

“And has she told Mr. Venn?” cried MacIntyre, greatly excited.

“Why, no. I tell her not to.”

“Don't let her, Phil. Keep it secret. Whatever you do, don't let Mr. Venn know.” Phil was in a hot fit that night, and MacIntyre let him down with his simple remonstrance.

Next day he was despondent, because things looked badly for the favourite. He began again. Philip answered, surlily—

“I am going to marry her, pillar of Presbyterian scrupulosity. My mind is made up.”

“Do not call names, Mr. Philip Durnford. It is not philosophical, nor is it polite.”

“I won't; but I am going to marry her,” said Philip.

“I knew a man once,” said MacIntyre, filling his tumbler with brandy and water, “much in your predicament. He was in love with a girl beneath him.”

“Now you are going to invent some lies of your own,” said Philip.

MacIntyre half rose.

“Sir, do not insult your own guest. If it was not for—for this full glass of grog, I'd go at once.”

“No, no—I beg your pardon. Go on with your parable.”

“It is no parable. Truth, sir—plain, unvarnished truth, will always be found better than parable. This, sir,” tapping his breast, “is a wholesale dépôt of truth. I knew the man of whom I am telling you well. A friend of his had been once an ordained Presbyterian minister. He said to him, ‘I will marry you privately. The marriage is

pairfectly good north of the Tweed. What it is south, I do not know. It will be time to raise the question after the ceremony is completed.’ Well, Philip, they were married. My friend performed the service in his own house. The question has never been raised, and never will be raised, because the marriage turned out happily—in consequence of the demise of the leddy.”

“Is that true?” Philip asked.

“Quite true. I was the man who married them.”

Mr. MacIntyre's powers of fiction are already too well known for me to waste any time in comment upon this speech. No tear, I have reason to believe, blotted that falsehood from the paper where it was taken down.

“I was the man,” said Alexander the Great, without a blush.

“Were you ever in orders—you?” asked Phil.

“I—why not? I was ordained, called, set aside, whatever you call it. It is true that I was young and inexperienced.”

“Good Lord, what a man it is!”

“I began by preaching in Edinburgh; but I failed in my very first appearance. They said I wanted unction. I don't know what I wanted. I had learned my discourse by heart the day before. Unfortunately, I took too much on the Saturday night; and in the morning, what with the whisky and what with the position, and the sermon half forgotten, I fear I made but a poor appearance in the pulpit, a sort o' stickit minister. I never preached there again.”

“What did you do next?”

“They wanted a missionary for the Jews in Constantinople. I went there. I stayed seven years. I converted three Jews, who, as I afterwards found, had been converted by all my predecessors in turn. They did not cost much; and as their names were always changed, they helped to make up the quarterly report. However, I had to give that work up; and I believe my three converts all relapsed. Eh! the hundreds of pounds those three rascals cost our country. I say nothing, Phil; but you will think over my parable, as you please to call it. Mind, I believe the marriage was pairfectly legal. You may find out, afterwards, whatever you please. Remember, the Church of Scotland is not yet disestablished. It is as respectable as your own Church.”

"Truly," said Philip, saluting him.

"I say, sir," repeated the reverend divine, "it is as respectable as yours. Otherwise, I should not be in it."

"Quite so," said Philip—"quite so."

"My friend, you see," he went on, "argued thus, by my advice: 'If I choose, I can at any time investigate the question of legality. On the other hand, my wife will always believe herself married. There will be no question of a very ugly word, because the Church will have done her part. A blessed thing it is, Philip, that there is a Church to protect the world.'"

He stopped for a moment, and took a sip of half a pint or so of brandy and water. Then his speech became suddenly thick.

"A real-a-tooill-a'lessed 'spensation of Providence. What that friend of mine, in love and all with most beautiful creech', would have done withou' th' Church, impossible to say." He steadied himself with an effort. "Phil, my dear boy, brandy always makes me ill. Gi' me a ma hat, ye blettherin' deevil, telling your stories, and keeping your old tutor out of bed. Gi' me ma hat, and le' me go. I'll tell ye the rest to-morrow."

The only drawback to the enjoyment derived from the great man's society was the fact that he was liable to these sudden fits of inebriation. They came upon him suddenly, without any warning, and reduced him all at once to a state of incoherence very painful to his friends. He had on these occasions—that is, nightly—just enough sense left to get home as fast as possible, and go to bed. On the few evenings when he did not retire thus overcome, he generally passed a sleepless night.

Philip, left alone, began to meditate. The evil suggestion of his tempter lay at his heart like a seedling waiting its time to take root and put forth its leaves. There was, over and above the other difficulties of the position, that of living if he were to marry. A very considerable slice of the five thousand was gone, that was quite clear. About the rest he was not quite clear, but there could not be much.

"What matters?" he murmured. "I will sell out, and we will do something—love like the birds, by gad. But I must and will have the girl."

He took out the locket again, and looked at the face which lay in it, with its bright, innocent smile. As he looked, his face softened.

"It is a shame," he said, "a shame. That scoundrel, MacIntyre. No, child, no. I will never wrong you."

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A CONTRIBUTOR.—II.

READERS of Dickens, Thackeray, and Anthony Trollope are repeatedly informed by those writers that editors are always willing to enlist new contributors in their service—nay, that they are not only willing, but actually desirous of doing so; and that a writer of indisputable literary capacity is quite certain of obtaining a hearing without difficulty, and of eventually being rated at his true value: in other words, that literary merit is a marketable commodity, and, like any other marketable commodity, is as certain of ultimately finding its level as water is. Now, when Messrs. Dickens, Thackeray, and Trollope wrote in this strain, I have no doubt but that they believed what they wrote; and it must be confessed that they all three had exceptionally good opportunities of forming an opinion with regard to such a matter. But, after all, nothing in this world—not even failure—perverts the judgment like success. Some part of the above may probably be true; but, on the other hand, I have no hesitation in saying that some of it is at least overstated; and that, as a whole, it is calculated to mislead. In the first place, I don't by any means believe it to be universally the case that editors are anxious to add new names to their staff of contributors. Then, with regard to literary capacity: the above is a very safe assertion to make. What *is* literary capacity? I will venture to say that there is not a lexicographer in England—or out of England either—who can give anything like a satisfactory definition of the term "literary capacity," for the very sufficient reason that it is indefinable. If by that term is meant the possession of a brilliant, dazzling genius—like Byron's, for instance—I admit that there is every likelihood of its ultimately meeting with recognition. If it means the possession of a powerful, aggressive intellect, like Mr. Carlyle's, I am quite prepared to admit that it will one day make its influence felt; though, in his case, it did not do so literally "without difficulty." Or if literary capacity means the possession of an intuitive, philosophic insight into and faculty of delineat-

ing character, like George Eliot's, it is undeniable that the world, sooner or later, must acknowledge the claims of its possessor. But to concede all this is to concede very little; and if Messrs. Dickens and Co., when they propounded the foregoing theory, meant no more than this, they might as well have given us the unnecessary piece of information that any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third side. To assert the contrary of their proposition would be to take a lower estimate of humanity than was taken by the great Dean of St. Patrick's himself; for if mankind were unable or unwilling to appreciate the claims of such writers as those above mentioned, mankind would, intellectually, be something even worse than Yahoos. But how about those writers who, without any such superlative claims to distinction, have yet something to say, and a fair command of respectable English to say it in? (Now, don't pronounce that sentence inelegant or ungrammatical; because, you know, there *is* a law, &c.) Take the case of a man with a reasonably good education, fair intellectual capacity, and a desire to write; and who has, moreover, sufficient common sense to know that he is not a heaven-born genius. He knows, let us say, that, as compared with any of the before-mentioned writers, he is a very ordinary sort of personage. He is well aware that no possible training would ever have enabled him to write "Childe Harold," "Sartor Resartus," or "Adam Bede." He is, nevertheless, aware that he has a considerable aptitude for the literary calling, and that he can turn out better work than three-fourths of the periodical literature of the day. But he has no acquaintance whatever, we will suppose, with editors or literary men, and has no other course open to him than simply to forward whatever he may write, backed by no introduction, to this, that, or the other editor, and leave it to take its chance along with the scores of other contributions with which editors are pestered every week of their lives. Under these circumstances, what are his prospects of meeting with favourable recognition, assuming him to have written a contribution up to, or even considerably above, par? I firmly believe the chances to be ten to one against his ever getting into print, though he should write and write until his fingernails drop off. And, in simple justice to the editorial fraternity, I don't believe the

blame for such a state of things rests altogether with them.

But the supposititious personage above described possesses undoubted literary capacity. Therefore, a man *may* be possessed of such capacity, and yet fail to find his proper literary level; Messrs. Dickens and Co. to the contrary notwithstanding.

"But," says Mr. Quivis, "the process whereby the above conclusion is arrived at is not properly worked out: in fact, it is not argument, but mere surmise, which begs the whole question."

Well, perhaps Mr. Quivis is right; but as I am an inveterate foe to beggars of every description, as I have as little sympathy with beggars of questions as with any other of the mendicant fraternity, I will venture to expand the foregoing argument until its force shall commend itself even to the intelligence of Mr. Quivis.

Proposition I.—Theorem: A man may be endowed with indisputable literary capacity, and yet fail to have his capacity acknowledged.

Bearing in mind the various pointed instances adduced in the first instalment of these Experiences, I think it will not be too much to assume that there *are* editors—perhaps very good fellows—whose judgment in literary matters is not worth much; just as there are persons in every other profession and calling who have not found their proper place in life—persons who realize Sydney Smith's felicitous illustration of the round peg and the square hole. Every one knows that there are erudite lawyers who can never learn special pleading, learned medical men who can never acquire the faculty of diagnosis, and deeply-read clergymen (alas, poor Blanco White!) who, after years of study, have very hazy notions concerning certain fundamental points of doctrine. The faculty of criticism may no doubt be wonderfully developed by judicious and painstaking cultivation—always provided that there *be* a faculty to start with; but the man who has it not in him by nature—and at least nine-tenths of mankind are of this class—can never become a judicious editor, and can never be a competent judge of literary capacity, or a suitable medium through which genuine capacity must take its chance of being made known to the world at large. And yet, circumstances may so combine as to place such a man in the editorial chair. That cir-

cumstances *have* actually so combined is sufficiently notorious. The little episode of my experience with the editor of the *Omnium Gatherum* furnishes an instance; and that instance is not an isolated one. It surely requires no formal argument to prove that with such an editor, an unknown contributor of ability is not likely to meet with his deserts. The mere circumstance that the latter *is* unknown is sufficient to exclude his contribution, which will probably never be read.

As a rider to the above, I may simply allude to the practice which prevails with some editors of deputing the examination of MSS. in the first instance to their juniors, who select from the bulk such papers as they deem worthy of being laid before the editor-in-chief. There seems to be no valid objection to such an arrangement as this, provided that the juniors are competent to the proper discharge of their duties. I have not had sufficient experience of the latter to enable me to form an opinion of them as a class. I have only come into personal contact with one of them since my arrival in England; of whom I will merely say that he is attached to the editorial chair of a semi-scientific periodical, and that, in discussing the merits of one of my own articles with him, I perceived that he entertained the impression that arsenic is a vegetable.

Again, editors have their own personal friends—or, at any rate, it is to be hoped that they have, for they are sure to make enemies enough and to spare. The editor of *The Miscellany* has humorously pointed out that an editor's friends are sure to rally round him with open arms, no matter how persistently they may have ignored his existence up to the time of his becoming an editor. Well, like the rest of mankind, editors are likely to regard the achievements of their friends with partiality. It is surely not upon the strength of their own intrinsic worth that a goodly per centage of the articles in the various magazines find acceptance. If they are really the best contributions at the editor's disposal, what must be the demerits of some of the rejected ones? If the former have been accepted and paid for, after a conscientious examination of all the MSS. which have been forwarded for judgment, and upon a sincere conviction that the former are of greater merit than the latter, what would be the merit of a volume filled with the latter alone? What punishment

could be devised more terrible than that of being compelled to work one's passage through such a volume from beginning to end? But, as a matter of fact, it is well known to every one connected with literary pursuits that very many articles, even in the best magazines, are *not* accepted on their merits, but on quite different grounds. An editor says to himself: "Here is a paper about the late Emperor Napoleon III. There is absolutely nothing new in it. It is a mere re-hash of the leading articles in the *Times* and *Telegraph*. But it is written by Tomkins, who is a first-rate fellow, and needs a helping hand. It will do for padding, and shall go in next month." Now, I don't in the least blame the editor for "backing of his friends," provided the principle—or want of principle—be not carried too far; but a very cursory examination of the various magazines will enable any competent critic to perceive that this sort of thing not unfrequently *is* carried too far. What, for instance, would be the prospect of Tomkins's article being accepted, if it were written and forwarded by Jenkins, an unknown contributor? And what would be Jenkins's chance, as against Tomkins, if the former's paper were incomparably the better of the two? I particularly request that all editors will not reply to this question at once.

Once more. Perkins is a young barrister, with abundance of spare time on his hands. That is to say, all his time is "spare," except what is consumed in eating, drinking, sleeping, visiting, and playing billiards. He is seized with *furor scribendi*, and, being socially well-connected, is slightly acquainted with Mr. Soandso, the famous novelist. He writes an article on some subject with which he is familiar, and calls on Mr. S. with a fairly transcribed copy of it. Ventures to ask Mr. S. for an introduction to some editor, with a view to getting his article printed, and thus paying the way for the sale of more articles in future. Mr. S. runs his eye over a page or two, sees that it is not absolute trash, and scratches off two non-committal lines to the editor of the *Tautological*. That editor, upon receipt of the letter, runs *his* eye over the article. It is neither better nor worse than thirty-four out of the forty-seven articles which he "declined with thanks" yesterday, nor than forty-six out of the sixty-two others that he will similarly decline next week; but after all, it is passable, and will

do for padding, and he would not willingly seem to treat Mr. Soandso, for whom he has an immense respect, with anything approaching to discourtesy. He accepts Perkins's article "with great pleasure," and will similarly accept more of that gentleman's articles in future, if they are at all suitable for publication. I don't mean to say that he would have accepted it, or that he will accept them, if it or they had been or shall be positively unfit for publication; but I do mean to say that the adventitious circumstance of Perkins's introduction by Mr. S. will give his contributions an indisputable advantage over those of much abler writers whose papers are left to be "judged upon their merits alone."

One morning, not more than a fortnight ago, I called at the office of the editor of a widely circulated magazine to which I myself am a contributor. I sent in my card, and while waiting in an ante-room, observed a pile of MSS., folded in various sizes, which three or four youths were busily occupied in putting up in wrappers, while another addressed them to their respective destinations. One of these youths, knowing me to be a contributor, informed me that they were all rejected MSS. I should think there could not have been less than from two to three hundred, and the whole lot made a pile about the size of a flour barrel. I, of course, asked no questions until I was *tête-à-tête* with the editor himself, who informed me that all the said MSS. had arrived by post within the last week.

"But," said I, "you don't mean to say that you have read them all?"

"By no means," he replied; "I leave all that to Mr. —, who reads at least the *titles*. The fact is, we don't care for outside contributions, and I have been seriously thinking of announcing that 'rejected MSS. cannot be returned,' as a means of abating the nuisance."

Now, I don't for a moment intend to cast any reflection upon Mr. — for not reading all these MSS. Of course his doing so would simply be out of the question. But I *do* blame him for sending printed circulars to the writers of those MSS., couched in such language as to convey the impression that he *had* read them, and that he considered them not suited to the requirements of his magazine. I blame him for this; because many an amateur, upon receipt of such a circular, believing it to be the honest

expression of opinion of a competent judge, will be discouraged from trying his fortune elsewhere. Well, you say, that will be no great loss, either to the public or the amateur himself. In a vast majority of cases, I admit that there will be no loss to any one; but in perhaps one case out of a hundred there may be; and, at any rate, the amateur ought to have his rights. Who can say that out of the two or three hundred papers above-mentioned not one was worth publishing? Is there not even a probability that out of so great a number at least one or two were written by persons of "undoubted literary capacity"? And, whether or not, is it not simply absurd to say, in the face of such a state of things, that editors are always desirous of enlisting new contributors, and that a writer of ability is sure to obtain a hearing "without difficulty"? Without difficulty! Whatever excuse there may have been for Dickens and Trollope writing in such a strain, one would have supposed that Thackeray's own dreary experiences of editorial stolidity and want of appreciation would have restrained *him* from such a dogmatic expression of opinion. But when he thus wrote he had himself assumed the editorial quill.

I think I have proved my theorem. Therefore, &c., Q. E. D.

WHAT A FLOWER DID FOR ME.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—III.

I WAS in a state of feverish agitation while dressing for dinner; indeed, my eager curiosity was unaccountable even to myself, for was not the cause insignificant in the extreme? A few words, spoken it might have been in jest, had sufficed to change me from a rational and sensible being to a decidedly *irrational* and trembling creature, whose hands shook so that he could scarcely fasten his shirt collar. The dinner bell rang a little while before my toilet was finished; but at length, with flushed cheek and beating heart, I descended the stairs to the drawing-room. "Now for it," thought I as I entered—when at the first glance at the table, the mystery was solved! On a lounge by the side of the two Misses Crawford was seated a young girl of twenty summers or so, with soft, melting blue eyes, and a wealth of light-brown hair. Dressed in white muslin, with one or two wild flowers in her tresses,

and simple bracelets on her white arms, I thought I had never seen any one so beautiful. She was the living embodiment of all my visionary ideals of womanly loveliness; she *more* than realized the fairest conceptions of my fancy! I stood in a half-dream till I was aroused by the clear, hearty tones of Sir Robert, who introduced me to the object of my admiration: "Miss Peel, a great friend of my two girls here; and a great favourite of mine too, if she will allow me to say so." Miss Peel returned my profound bow with a very slight one, as I seated myself in a chair opposite her, still in a kind of half-dream, and wondering whether my lovely *vis-à-vis* could have dropped from the clouds, so sudden was her appearance on the Charwood stage. I was very absent that evening, and did all kinds of foolish things. I behaved so strangely altogether, that Lady Crawford could not resist rallying me on my *gaucherie*.

"Why, I vow, Mr. Alwyne," she said, "our little surprise has quite turned your head. Cecile and Marian there were privy to our little conspiracy" (both girls looked archly at me over the intervening ferns); "but *you*, Miss Peel, I verily believe" (here I blushed like a peony), "are the real culprit."

Here her ladyship laughed, and paused for a reply; but my tongue seemed literally glued to my mouth, and I could say nothing. Miss Peel, however, was quite composed; though it was evident, from the half-amused expression on her sweet face, that she entered into the joke—if such it could be called—as much as any of them. Her voice, so clear and silvery, thrilled through every nerve, and her faintest smile seemed to light up as with a torch the innermost recesses of my heart, and to make delightful sunshine there.

When the ladies had retired, and Sir Robert and I were sipping our claret, I made an effort, and said—

"And who is Miss Peel, your fair guest, Sir Robert? She is certainly a very pretty girl, and I must say you all displayed great address in keeping her arrival a secret from me."

The baronet had a mischievous look in his clear, honest face, as he replied—

"You are right; she *is* a pretty girl, and has refused more offers than any other lass in the county. Her parents died many

years ago, and she lives with an old maiden aunt at L——, some twenty miles from here. She is a firm friend of my girls, and passes a few weeks every summer here. She only arrived to-day during the afternoon, when you, I presume, were reading your book. But," added Sir Robert, lowering his voice a little, "there is a mystery about her. She has a peculiar whim or idiosyncrasy—call it what you will—which I have never observed in any one else. However, you will perhaps have an opportunity of finding this out for yourself; so I will say no more about her now, beyond telling you that she is an heiress. So go in and win, Alwyne. You have my best wishes, and she will make you an excellent wife, that I am sure of."

I sat silent and thoughtful, twirling the stem of my glass with an unsteady hand. I cared nothing about her being an heiress. I was wealthy enough for both, for that matter; but her wonderful beauty, her liquid blue eyes whose depths seemed unfathomable, her musical voice and irresistible smile—who could resist these? Then there was that mystery about her mentioned by my host which invested her with a double charm in my eyes, and drew the silken chains, in which my heart was already bound, still closer. Sir Robert rallied me more than once on my silence and absent fits, and at last led the way to the drawing-room. Miss Peel was singing a plaintive German air, while Marian Crawford played her accompaniment on the piano. Her sweet, fresh young voice rose and fell, and its delicious cadences mingled lovingly with the soft murmurs of the night breeze as it stirred the roses that clustered in profusion round the open windows.

If my eye had been charmed before, my ear was still more so now; and, when the singer had finished, I could not help complimenting her warmly on her exquisite performance. She received my ecstatic admiration rather wearily, I fancied—with the air of one long accustomed to extort homage from mankind. It had evidently become too common now to be much valued by her; and, though she was cordial enough to me during the rest of the evening, her manner was not such as to give me the slightest encouragement—indeed, at times, I thought it almost chilling.

The next day we all drove to B——, to be present at the annual horticultural show.

I was walking with Miss Peel, between the banks of glowing colour and rare fragrance, when she suddenly stopped short before a small blue flower. I looked at her with astonishment, as well I might, for she stood as though rooted to the spot, her gaze intently riveted on the little flower, and a strange, dreamy look of passionate admiration in her beautiful eyes.

"Mr. Alwyne," she murmured, in broken tones, so unlike her natural voice that I could scarcely recognize it, "how foolish you must think me; but there is in that flower a peculiar shade of blue—a colour akin to that of the sapphire or the summer sky—that always affects me in a remarkable way whenever I meet with it. I cannot say why. I am passionately fond of flowers—and, oh! what would I not give for a *wild flower*" (for the specimen before us was a garden one) "of the same glorious hue as yon little gem there. I love all wild flowers so! But I fear there is little chance of my wishes ever being gratified," she added; "for I never saw during my botanical rambles any *wild flower* at all like it; and garden plants, however lovely, have not half the charm in my eyes that their sisters of the woods and forests have."

Here she paused suddenly, as though ashamed of her confession, and glanced timidly at my face. Her whole manner had changed so suddenly—the reserve had melted so quickly before such a seemingly insignificant cause—that for the moment I was completely nonplussed, and knew not what to say. We had been a little apart from the main crowd during her unexpected rhapsody over the little flower, but had now moved on, and joined the stream of human life once more.

But strange, wild thoughts whirled through my brain. Had I not seen that exquisite tint before? And then I said to my companion—who evidently was still thinking of her floral favourite—in as indifferent a tone as I could assume—

"Is not the little village of M—— somewhere near this place?"

"That it certainly is," she replied; "but the little village of M—— won't be able to gratify my floral aspirations, I fear," she added almost coldly, as though piqued at my seeming indifference or want of sympathy. We here rejoined our party, and drove home in the waning light, a much more silent group than we had come—each

one seemed engrossed in his or her thoughts that evening.

About half-past eleven that night, when Charwood and its inmates were buried in profound repose, I stole quietly away over the silent park towards the high road. The noble oaks and silent mere were sleeping in the soft light of the August moon, which was sailing slowly through the fleecy clouds, in the starlit sky. The whole scene, silvered with her divine radiance, was fraught with peace—perfect peace, and perfect rest. But the external calm and tranquillity ill consorted with the agitation of my spirit—upon which, like barques on a stormy sea, hopes and fears were restlessly tossing hither and thither. I *felt* that long-forgotten flower by the brook would be the "open sesame" to her heart; for I well remembered her words that day, and I knew that the flower of the *brook*, whilst closely resembling it in hue, was even yet fairer than the flower of the garden. But should I find it in its old home? Might not some enterprising botanist or stray tourist have long since rooted it up? And I had seen no *more like* it on that July night a year ago! The weird and witching hour; the ever-growing presentiment that my whole future happiness depended on my finding the gentle plant in its pleasant home; the decided air of romance that invested the whole affair—all these worked strongly in my disturbed mind as I sped swiftly on. At length I emerged on the high road; and after making inquiries of a few solitary pedestrians whom I met, I struck into a sequestered lane which I was informed led straight to M—— brook, the one of which I was in search.

After walking a mile or two, I came to the little village of M——, my old rendezvous—and there, white and silent in the moonlight, was the little inn, half hidden in roses and honeysuckles, where I had revelled in strawberries and cream twelve months ago! Thence all was plain sailing, and I soon arrived at the spot where the brook sparkled across the lane, where I had seen the kingfisher shoot past me like a blue meteor on that July evening. Following the brook up as before, I came to the tall trees on its marge; and there in the hedge opposite, shining on in its placid beauty as of old, I saw the bell-shaped flower! With a bursting heart I sprang lightly across the stream, and gently detached it from the parent stem.

I need not dwell upon my return journey—joy lent wings to my feet, and the early dawn saw me safely once more in my apartment, depositing my prize in water.

Sleep was out of the-question; and, ere the sun had risen half an hour, I was pacing the lawn, greedily inhaling the fresh, unsunned air.

A light footstep behind me made me turn round; and there, in white, but looking pale and excited, was the object of my thoughts.

She greeted me cordially enough, and then said—

"Who would have thought of meeting you here at this hour, Mr. Alwyne? But I am glad we have met, for I wish to tell you of a strange dream I had last night. Only think," she added, with heightened colour and sparkling eyes, "I dreamed that *you*, like a gallant knight of old, had gone in quest of my long-desired flower, and had, after many years' wanderings, returned to lay it at my feet! And I was so enraptured——"

Here I interrupted her.

"A moment, Miss Peel, and your dream shall be realized!"

She stared at me in unfeigned astonishment; but the next moment I had again set foot on the lawn with the flower in my hand.

She almost snatched it from me in an ecstasy of joy, and rained on it a shower of kisses.

* * * * *

I am writing these last lines in the verandah of our pretty cottage, on this still August evening. Two golden-haired children are playing at my feet, and two deep-blue eyes are looking lovingly into mine; whilst a little white hand points to a dried flower between the leaves of the book on my knee; and then I hear, in soft, sweet tones—

"And never you forget, sir, to the end of your days, what a flower did for you!"

THE CHANCES OF A THIRD EMPIRE.

THE distinguished man whose death has been so lately recorded, Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, was born the heir to an historic name, and became the representative of a now historic tradition. With

him have died the Napoleonic legend, the best hopes of the Bonaparte family, and the Bonapartist faction. With his son remain the chances of a third Empire.

Born to the Imperial purple, his early infancy was passed at the Palace of the Tuileries, under the very eye of his illustrious uncle. The youngest son of Louis, King of Holland, and of Hortense Beauharnais, the Empress Josephine's daughter, his father was the third brother of the first Napoleon, and his own chance of succeeding to the Imperial crown of France arose from the fact that the children of his father's elder brothers were disqualified for the succession: the children of Joseph by their sex; those of Lucien by the disfavour with which their father was regarded by the master of the family destinies. So that from the date of his birth, on the 20th of April, 1808, Charles Louis Napoleon became a very important member of that wonderful family that at one time seemed likely to furnish all the thrones of Europe with kings and queens. He soon gained the favour of his uncle. "His name was written down at the head of the family register of the Napoleon dynasty."

His baptism was delayed for two years and a half, until on the 10th of November, 1810, the Emperor and his newly married spouse, Maria Louisa, were his sponsors. Five months after, the King of Rome was born; and though no longer heir apparent, Charles Louis was still treated as heir presumptive to the throne of France. When the fortunes of his great uncle were finally settled on the field of Waterloo, the various members of the Bonaparte family, reduced to a private station and banished from France, established themselves in various countries. Queen Hortense and her son spent eight years at Augsburg. For six years more the boy was educated under private tutors, at the Castle of Arenenberg, Switzerland. Here he joined the Swiss Militia, and made friends with General Dufour.

With the July (1830) Revolution in Paris, the young hope of the Bonaparte family no doubt thought he saw the beginning of a revival of the glories of his name; but his offers were repulsed coldly by the then rulers of France. His first appearance in the field was at the outbreak in the Roman States in February, 1831. This bloodless campaign ended in his catching the measles at Ancona.

His elder brother died of the same complaint at Forli.

In 1831 all that Louis Napoleon hoped for was, in his own words, "to be able to serve her (France) as a citizen and soldier." This he said was "worth all the thrones in the world."

In 1848 all this was changed. Seventeen years and the circumstances had changed the case. He was the acknowledged head of the Bonaparte family, and opinion in France was almost entirely well-disposed to the dynasty he represented. The Vendôme column bore his great uncle's statue, while the dome of the Invalides sheltered the hero's mortal remains. All was again becoming Napoleonic; and the only mistake the exile made in attacking the Strasburg barracks in '36, or in landing at Boulogne in '40, was in being too soon. He should have waited longer.

Cæsar was there, ready to don the Imperial habit; but his empire was not yet in readiness for him. But a prison was; and from October 30th to November 21st, 1836, and from August 4th, 1840, to May 25th, 1846, he played the rôle of a State prisoner with dignity and composure.

Two years later his opportunity came, bringing with it for Louis Napoleon the post of President of the Republic. Then came the *Deux Décembre*—the palace of the Tuileries, where he was born, once again—the crown of an Emperor. His reign of nineteen years, the catastrophe that brought it to an end, his exile in England, and his death at Chislehurst, hardly need even the barest recapitulation here. He has left a lady who was devotedly attached to him, and an only son, who is now the undisputed head of the Bonaparte dynasty, who inherits the traditions of the first and second Empires, and to whose keeping is committed the Napoleonic legend.

What, then, are the chances of a third Empire for France?

We believe they are slight. The Emperor was good, but the Empire was bad. The chief of the State came in for much more than his share of the disgrace of Sedan.

But the people of France now are in no mood to do his memory justice. They ask for peace, for a stable government, for prosperity. They desire no *coup d'état*, no struggle for supremacy among rival pretenders to the throne.

The excitement among the Imperialist

party, caused by recent events at Chislehurst, will soon have subsided.

Their expressions of opinion of late are hardly their calm and deliberate thoughts. The difficulties in the way of a new Empire under a regency, distasteful in itself, or under an Emperor in his teens, are insuperable. The second Empire was not only Napoleon the Third. It was De Morny, Persigny, St. Arnaud, and a dozen other less famous but equally zealous and capable men. Once at the head of affairs, government to them was easy. They had a theory cut and dried. They soon made it a practice—for France, not the pleasantest rule in the world. But it was impossible then to resist. The men in power were too strong. But when the currents of feeling, pent up for nearly twenty years, at length broke their dams, what a flood it was! Shall there be again for twenty years in Paris, any the least chance of the horrors of the Commune? We hope not. We see no prospect of either Bourbon or Bonaparte getting to the front. The De Mornys, Persignys, and St. Arnolds of the *Deux Décembre* are not to be found in 1873 among the adherents of either pretender to Imperial power. The Empire is a Republic. It seems necessary for the happiness of France that it should remain so.

HER MAJESTY'S COMMISSIONERS OF CUSTOMS

AND

THE AUTHOR OF
"WRITTEN WITH A PURPOSE."

A VERY edifying correspondence has taken place between her Majesty's Commissioners and Mr. Dent, the author of an article which appeared in our columns on the 9th of November last. It will be within the memory of our readers, that in his article, "Written with a Purpose," Mr. Dent's purpose was to enter a protest against, and to do something towards removing, the widespread gratuity nuisance; that he brought a general charge of corruption against the officials of the Liverpool Custom House; and that, in our issue of December 28th, we published the substance of the first letter of her Majesty's Commissioners on this subject, and announced our intention of letting our readers know if any steps were taken by the Commissioners in the matter.

We now proceed to do so. In a letter

dated January 9th, the Commissioners comment on Mr. Dent's reply to their first communication, which we published on January 4th. They say:—

"In it" (the reply) "you repeat the charge of general corruption against the Customs officers of Liverpool, qualifying it with the admission that there may be one or even two honest men among the Liverpool Custom House officers; but you decline to comply with the request which the Commissioners made to you, and which the editor had no doubt you would comply with, to assist them in identifying the officer on whose acceptance of your money, as well as on general notoriety—of which you offer no proof whatever—you found your charge; because, as you state, you have been insulted; but that, 'apart altogether from the insult, you should decline the honour of gratuitously constituting yourself an approver on behalf of her Majesty's Customs.'

"I am now desirous to point out to you—first, as respects the insult you profess to have received in the letter of the Commissioners, dated December 11th, that the Commissioners did not dispute the truth of the definite charge of which you could speak from personal knowledge, but only expressed their belief that the general charge of corruption against the officers was unjustifiable, and to that conviction they still adhere; secondly, that, assuming your statement of what occurred to yourself to be accurate, you have given money to a public servant, not as in the case of a railway or hotel servant, for the performance of a service which he is bound to perform gratuitously, but for the non-performance of a duty which he was bound to perform in the execution of his duty to the Crown, as a check upon you; that upon this, your own act of subornation, you have founded and published a charge of general corruption against an entire branch of the Customs at Liverpool; and that upon being asked to supply such evidence to substantiate this individual case in which you were concerned as might prevent its recurrence, by the punishment of the offender, you refused to give any such assistance to the Commissioners for that purpose."

In conclusion, the board state again their readiness to institute an inquiry.

In his reply to this, Mr. Dent, on the 10th of January, explains the circumstances under which he fell in with the common

practice of "tipping" the Custom House officials at Liverpool. He writes to the Commissioners, he is "glad to learn that her Majesty's Commissioners do not dispute the truth of the definite statement made by me in *ONCE A WEEK*; but I submit that the language used by you in your communication to the editor of that magazine (in which you say that 'there *may* be *one* official who has so misconducted himself') implies a doubt, or at most only a qualified belief in my statement, and was such as to justify me in inferring that my veracity was doubted.

"I further beg to say that, in giving half a crown to the servant in question, I was *not* guilty of an act of subornation. As my trunks contained nothing subject to the payment of duty, I had no occasion for wishing to elude inspection; and the gratuity was given simply to expedite the passing of my luggage, and to abridge my detention at the Custom House.

"In conclusion, I have to say that the general charge preferred by me was *not*, as you say, founded upon a single instance of corruption, but upon amply sufficient data; and that, in the event of an investigation taking place, I will, if properly called upon, as in duty bound, tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

On the 13th, the Commissioners instruct their secretary to state that, as Mr. Dent has "now intimated that, in the event of an investigation taking place, you will be prepared to give evidence in support of the charges you have preferred against the officers at Liverpool, the board will direct one of their officers of high standing in London to proceed to that port to conduct the inquiry at any time that may be most convenient to you, and that every facility will be afforded to you for identifying the officer to whom you gave the half-crown."

On the 14th, Mr. Dent writes to say that, "if the thing really has to be done, it will make little difference to him when he goes."

On the 20th, he is informed "that the board have fixed Thursday next, the 23rd instant, for the investigation to take place, and have instructed Mr. Ogilvie, Surveyor-General, to proceed to Liverpool to conduct the inquiry."

Mr. Dent's attendance is requested at the Custom House, Liverpool, at eleven o'clock on the 23rd; and he is—quite gratuitously, it appears to us—informed that "the evi-

dence will be taken on oath." The obvious inference being that her Majesty's Commissioners only suggest, "You may have written in ONCE A WEEK what you won't swear to before Mr. Ogilvie, Surveyor-General."

On the 21st, Mr. Dent acknowledges the receipt of the information that Mr. Ogilvie, Surveyor-General, is to "proceed" to Liverpool; and expresses a hope that the Surveyor-General will have a pleasant trip, and return to his friends reinvigorated in health and spirits.

For the "last time," Mr. Dent says he is quite ready "to attend the proposed investigation when properly called upon."

Having stated all the incidents of the correspondence, it only remains for us to congratulate the country upon the zeal of the Custom House authorities; to reiterate our belief in the correctness of our contributor's views as to the present state of morality among subordinate Customs officers; and to ask our readers in the United States, as well as in Great Britain—very many of whom have doubtless landed at the port of Liverpool—to let us know their experiences of the incorruptibility of the gentlemen who did or did not overhaul their baggage at that port. It is hardly fair to leave one American gentleman to fight this battle single-handed.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—II.

THE next night, as soon as we had done supper and were comfortably seated round the fire—for we had taken Pat's advice and brought some articles with us from the Rangitata—we called on Bill for the promised story.

"What I am going to tell you will not, I fear, prove very interesting," said he, "but it will account for the very extraordinary and very unsatisfactory position in which I am placed, and which, but for the kindness of Stevens, would be still more unpleasant."

"Well, never mind that humbug," interrupted Stevens; "let us have your story, and we can judge for ourselves whether it is interesting or not. I haven't got over the creepy feeling Pat's tale gave me yet, and I want something to drive it out of my head. So fire away, old chap."

"Be so good as to put a little more hot water into my pannikin, Harry—the kettle

is beside you—and I'll begin. Talking is dry work, and I had better be prepared beforehand, so that there may be no false starts.

"As I had no intention of paying New Zealand a visit when I left 'dear old England a long way behind me,' although 'to better my fortune I crossed the deep sea,' and as my being here is purely the result of accident, I shall call my adventure 'The Involuntary Emigrant.'"

THE INVOLUNTARY EMIGRANT.

Perhaps you may have heard of the large amount of treasure which is reported as having been buried in various islands on the north-west coast of South America by the ancient buccaneers—treasures that have been sometimes, although I believe very seldom, found, but for which search has been and still is frequent. The Cocoa Islands are said to be the chosen place of deposit for an enormous amount of booty, placed there either by the notorious Morgan or by one of his followers; but although several parties have gone from Panama in search, nothing of value has yet been discovered there. Yet little doubt can be entertained as to the fact of the treasure having been hidden there; although, of course, it may have been removed again to some other place more difficult of access, which would account for the want of success of the searching expeditions.

About eighteen months ago I met an old schoolmate of mine, who had just returned from Panama, and who had been one of an expedition which had gone to the Cocoa Islands in search of the hidden treasure. The search had been, like all former ones, fruitless; but he had returned more than ever convinced that it was there, and more determined than ever to renew the search.

He was so sanguine, and gave me so many reasons in favour of his opinion, that at last I began to believe, and soon became as warm on the subject as he was. You all know how infectious "gold fever" is, and how soon and how fiercely that fire, once lighted, burns up. To make a long story short, we determined to have a really good and proper search—not such as had been made before, but by going there and giving at least a year up to it; and if we found any encouraging signs, to remain for even double that time. Now, in order to do this, many things were required. In the first place we

would require a small steamship, and this must be manned, not by the ordinary sailors, but by men whose hearts were in the enterprise, and who would not be discouraged by long-continued failure. This, after a great deal of trouble, we got settled to our satisfaction.

We bought a steam yacht of about one hundred and seventy tons—one that could sail pretty fast under canvas; but, as she had only about fifteen-horse power, she could not steam at any great speed against a head wind and sea. Our crew consisted of fourteen hands—all gentlemen, and quite determined to “go the whole hog.” Four of them were engineers by profession, so we were well off in that respect; and three were sailors—two in the merchant service, and one was a retired lieutenant in the navy. Nearly all the remainder were accustomed either to the sea or yachting in English waters. So, you see, we were not a bad crew.

We laid in a good supply of provisions, clothes, books, tools, a good cask of brandy, lots of light wines, and other things “too numerous to mention,” as the auctioneers’ advertisements say. I ought to tell you that we had also four small tents, light and handy to carry and fix. We had also a small lifeboat built expressly for us, intended for the use of only two or three at a time, and light enough to be carried for a mile or two if necessary. This was hung over the stern, with oars, sails, spars, anchor, fishing lines, &c.—all ready for use at a moment’s notice. I fear I tire you with these particulars, but they are necessary so that you may fully understand my tale.

By the end of March last we were ready to start; and as we were anxious to lose no time, we took leave of England on the twenty-ninth day of March.

We intended sailing, and economizing our coal as much as possible, as we knew we should require all we could carry to push us through the calms of the Tropics, and we did not intend touching at any port until we got to Panama, where we proposed revictualling and coaling.

We had a pleasant and prosperous voyage going through the Straits of Magellan, where the scenery was so charming that we were tempted to stay and enjoy ourselves. However, as our reason for not calling at various ports en route was the knowledge that we should be lingering at each place to examine

it and to amuse ourselves, and so lose much time, we contented ourselves with remaining in the Straits for ten days, fishing, sketching, and rambling about; and a very pleasant ten days’ spree it was. After leaving the Straits, we soon ran into hot weather and calms; and, as we were more than ever anxious to get to the end of our voyage, we did a good deal of steaming.

By the end of July we were close to the Equator, and the nights were so hot that I used to sleep every night in the small lifeboat I mentioned as being hung over the stern. I had taken two of the small tents—one of which I used as a mattress, and the other I put over the boat to serve as an awning to keep off the heavy night dews. Every evening I put fresh water into the small cask which was always kept on board, and took good care that there was a good supply of eatables stowed away in the locker, which was made watertight; and fortunate for me it was that I did so, as you will see.

The twenty-third of July had been a very hot day, with not a puff of wind; so we had been going along under steam, about half-speed, all day. The sea was as smooth as a millpond, and reflected every object like a mirror. I had tried very hard to catch a large shark which kept following us; but as I could not get my bait clear of the broken water caused by the screw, and as Mr. Shark seemed to shun that part of the ocean, I was unsuccessful. As usual, when not my watch on deck, I had gone to sleep in the lifeboat. I remember, with curious distinctness, that I was dreaming that I was bathing in the pond, “where as schoolboys we all used to swim,” and that I was in the act of taking a header from the bank when I awoke, and found myself actually struggling in the water. Strange to say—whether it was the effect of my dream preparing my mind or not, I do not know—I was not startled, not even surprised. I am a good swimmer, and as soon as I got to the surface, took a good look about. It was a clear, starry night, but no moon; still, plenty of light for me to see the *Vesper*, as we called our yacht, quietly steaming away from me. Of course, I yelled and called as loudly as I could, but no one seemed to hear me, no doubt owing to the noise of the machinery and the screw. The man at the wheel was protected from the sun and rain by a small deck-house, and

this prevented him effectually from either seeing or hearing anything astern of the yacht. Slowly, but surely, the lights of the *Vesper* got dimmer and dimmer, as each time I rose on the top of a roller, I looked anxiously after her. I knew it was worse than useless trying to swim after her, and that the best thing I could do was to nurse my strength, and remain as nearly as possible in the same place; so that when they missed me—as they must do soon, for I had the middle watch—there would be more chance of their picking me up.

I dare say you remember, when you were boys, and all your little companions were going for a day's pleasure, leaving you, perhaps for being naughty or idle, at home alone, how wistfully you gazed after them; and how, when you at last lost sight of them, your heart utterly failed, and you burst into tears. Well, my feelings at that moment were very much the same as then. I do not think they were any more intense. It never entered into my head that they would not return and pick me up; nor did I doubt but that I could keep afloat for hours, and the water was just cool enough to be invigorating.

I must have been in the water for some hours before the first indications of day appeared; but, as the light grew brighter, although I eagerly strained my eyes in hopes of seeing the *Vesper* returning, I was doomed to be disappointed. Nothing was to be seen but sea around and sky above me. As I gazed round me, suddenly I saw a black line not thirty yards off, which rose and then disappeared. Oh, the agony of that moment! I felt sure at once that it was the shark, which I had tried all the day before to catch, now come to devour me. I burst into a perspiration, although in the water, and, for the first time, despaired of my life. Losing all presence of mind in this new and awful danger, I struck out madly, not caring in what direction I swam; but, from excess of fear, choosing rather to face the monster than to turn my back on him. Each moment I expected to see his white belly turned up, and the great mouth gaping to snatch at me. Minutes passed—they seemed hours to me—but nothing appeared; still, I thought that delay only prolonged my misery, and I almost wished the fatal moment was come. Then, as I rose again on a large wave, I saw the black thing, this time close; and, to my intense delight, had

time, before sinking into the trough again, to see that it was not the fin of a shark. Could it be a small whale asleep? As I rose again, I eagerly looked; and judge my surprise to find that the bugbear that nearly frightened me to death was likely to prove my saviour. It was a boat; but very full of water, and with only a few inches of the gunwale to be seen.

I soon swam to it, and then found that it was the small lifeboat—my bed-room, in fact. I caught hold of the side, and tried to climb into her; and at the first attempt nearly capsized her. That would not do; so I went to the stern, and managed to clamber into her. My first thought was to get the water out of her, and how to do so without a bale-can puzzled me. Of course I could have got a pan out of the locker; but if I opened that I should let the water in; and, as the locker formed a very buoyant portion of the boat, might sink my vessel. As I was pondering over this, I saw a small black object floating about fifty or sixty yards distant, which I at once knew to be my hat. There was a bale-dish, with only the trouble of going for it. As I was getting over the side again, and had just put one foot into the water, I saw a flash under the boat, and up came my friend the shark. I had only time to pull my leg up into the boat again, when he dashed furiously upwards, rearing at least two feet of himself out of the water—his great open mouth showing me that I had not gained the shelter of the boat one moment too soon. As I knew he would hang about the boat where his prey was, I was doubly anxious to get the water out; for if the wind and sea rose ever so little I was doomed. I tried throwing it out in the hollow of my two hands, and got a little out in that way; but another sight of a black fin, lying quietly and steadily on the surface of the sea within a few yards of me, stimulated me to invent some speedier process. The tent I had used as a bed still lay in the bottom of the boat, jammed under the thwarts; so I took one corner, and, forming it into a sort of bag, began baling away in capital style. It took me some time to empty her, for as the water got shallow I had to use the tent as a sort of sponge, soaking up and wringing out the water; but at last I got her dry. My next business was to search about for something to make a mast of, on which I could hoist something in the form of a sail,

more in the hope of attracting attention than for the purpose of sailing. I was fortunate in finding one of the oars still in the boat, and on this I hung a good large piece of the tent, as a signal of distress in case the *Vesper* returned to look for me. Then I opened the locker and examined my stores of provisions, which I found uninjured by the water. I had plenty of food to last me for a long time; and long before I could finish them I hoped to fall in with some ship, if I was so unfortunate as to miss the *Vesper*. Water also I was well supplied with; so I had no fear of suffering from hunger or thirst for some time to come. What I required most were oars, mast, and sails; and these I hoped yet to find, for I knew they were in the boat when she fell into the sea, and therefore, judging from having seen my cap floating so near to me, felt certain they could not be far distant. Not to tire you with such details, I will just say that after paddling about, with the one oar I possessed, for some hours, I succeeded in picking up the mast, sails, one more oar, and the rudder. On examining the boat, I found that one of the ropes—"falls" I think is the nautical term—used for hoisting her on the davits had got chafed and had broken, and the ring-bolt in the stem of the other was torn out, thus accounting for my fall in the sea, and for the boat being close to me.

All that day I strained my eyes looking round the horizon in a vain search for the *Vesper*. It was just dusk when I thought I saw a line of smoke, or a long, narrow, black cloud, I could not say which. How I longed for a light to hang up, and so attract the notice of my companions, if it was the *Vesper*; but the few matches I had in my pocket were so wet that not one would light, although I foolishly wasted every one in the vain attempt to find one dry enough to give a spark. Soon I saw a light coming towards me, but a long way off; then I saw the two side lights and a mast light, showing it was a steam vessel, and of course I concluded it must be the *Vesper*, and that in a very short time I would be on board again, all safe and sound. But I was doomed to be more sadly disappointed now than ever; for slowly, when within a quarter of a mile of me, first the green and then the red light disappeared, showing me that the ship was put about and was now fast leaving me. In vain I shouted again, no one heard me; and soon I was left all alone on the Pacific, with

nothing but a half-inch plank between me and death in its most horrible form.

I believe I was more disheartened by this second desertion than when I was left struggling in the water—perhaps because then I was buoyed up with the hope of being soon looked for and rescued; but now I felt that the search for me was given up as hopeless—that I was truly dead to the world. And now that I had more leisure to ponder over my fate, I saw how poor a chance I possessed of ever being rescued. I, a mere speck, an atom which the first gale might sink, left alone, deserted by my companions on the vast waste of the heaving ocean, had now to fight my solitary, hopeless battle, with little but a lingering, painful death to anticipate, or the still more dreadful one of being torn to pieces and devoured by the hungry jaws of the savage monster which still pursued me with relentless obstinacy.

I never saw the *Vesper* again.

Day after day I lay under the broiling sun, with not enough wind to move my little boat or to ruffle the glassy surface of the glittering sea. After much thought and deliberation, I determined to try and row due south, far enough to get out of the perpetual calm I was now in, and then to make sail and run either east or west, as the wind suited. Eastward, I should, I calculated, reach the coast of South America in a week, or ten days at farthest, besides having a good chance of meeting a ship. Westward I should have to sail farther, but with probably a more certain and lasting wind; and should, likely enough, meet a whaler cruising about. So I determined on taking my chance.

I rowed for four days before I got wind enough to induce me to make sail; but at last a nice gentle, cool breeze came from the east; so I steered nearly due west, and ran away before it, my little craft going very fast through the smooth water. So I sailed on and on, and never saw anything but sea and sky—I am glad to say my friend, the shark, had given me up as a bad lot, and left me—for thirteen days; but still, in comparative comfort, having plenty to eat and drink, and, in that warm, dry climate, not feeling the want of a covering over my head, excepting in the middle of the day, when the heat and glare of the sun were almost unbearable.

It was on the 11th of August that my worst misfortune happened. By some means

or other the cask, containing all the fresh water I had, rolled over, and, the plug not being firmly fixed, all the water except about a pint leaked out. It must have happened at night when I was asleep; for I only discovered my loss when I went to get water for my breakfast. This loss made me think of overhauling my eatable stores; and then I found that I had not food to last more than a week, using half rations only; and so, if I did not fall in with a ship in ten days at most, I should have to suffer from hunger and thirst. I could hardly expect to sight any islands so soon.

Another week passed, and although I had not suffered greatly from hunger, I had from thirst, and I could hardly refrain from drinking the salt water which kept lapping and sparkling up on the sides of the boat, as if inviting and tempting me to do so. I had still a small quantity of water, which I was determined to keep until I could do so no longer. The next day I had finished all my food; but the want of this was nothing to the torture I endured from the want of water. That night I drank the last drop of water, and although it relieved me for the moment, I think in a few hours afterwards I was worse than before I took it.

How the next five days passed I have no very distinct recollection; but I can remember laughing and singing, and talking aloud, and giving orders to an imaginary crew. I know I slept very little; and I wonder now how I contrived to keep the boat's head in the proper direction.

On the night of the 24th of August—I think that must have been the date—I must either have fallen asleep or become insensible; but I think that, worn out, I had fallen into a deep, heavy sleep. Be that as it may, I awoke and found my boat full of water, and lying over on her beam ends. I could see a great deal of white water round me, and behind what looked like a high black wall. As I scrambled to my feet, a large wave broke right over my boat and washed me out of her, and, to my surprise, threw me on to a low, sandy beach. Weak as I was, I contrived to crawl up out of reach of the next wave, and then I must have fallen asleep again; for I remember nothing more until I was awakened next morning by the singing of birds in the woods close by. For a few minutes I lay still, thinking I was dreaming, or that it was one of the many strange fancies which had for the last few

days been continually wandering through my brain. Soon, however, I saw it was a reality. Beside me lay, strewed about the sand, nearly all the articles which had been lying loose in the bottom of the boat; and a few yards lower down the beach lay the boat herself, seemingly little the worse for the shipwreck it had suffered during the night.

Although very weak, the knowledge of being once more on dry land seemed to give me strength, and renewed my energy; and I made an effort to crawl close down to the water's edge in search of shell-fish, abundance of which I found, and soon made a meal of. But thirst troubled me most; and as soon as I had recovered strength sufficient I went in quest of water, of which I found a little in the hollow of a rock, but no stream.

All that day I lay in a state of half stupor; but the next morning I felt wonderfully fresh and well, although very weak. My first care was to get a good store of shell-fish, and then to go off in search of water, and this time with better success, for not more than a quarter of a mile off I came to a small fresh-water lake, of some two or three hundred yards in width. I also found plenty of fruit, and saw numbers of birds, some of which were so tame that I had no difficulty in knocking one over with a stick. This I skinned, and by laying it on the hot rocks and changing it from place to place, I made it more eatable—I called it cooked. I stayed for two or three days at the same place, not caring to venture far, in my weak state, from a spot where food and water could both be got with so little trouble. As soon as I felt strong enough to bear a day's walking, I started off to explore my island, determined first of all to keep by the beach, in hopes of finding some trace of inhabitants. My discoveries in this direction simply came to this fact—namely, that the island was about ten or twelve miles round, and I thought rather oval in shape. On the opposite side there was a beautiful and nicely sheltered little bay, with a small stream of water running into the sea, and a point of rocks from which, as I stood on them, I could see numbers of fish gliding about in the clear water. I determined to examine the boat, and if not too much damaged, to bring her round to this spot as soon as possible.

I found the boat was little if any the worse, and soon cleared her of the sand that had been washed into her. My greatest trouble

was to float her; but this I managed to do by scraping, with the blade of one of the oars, a sort of trench out of the sand, and when the tide came pushing her off. I then anchored her, and waiting until the tide ebbed again, carried all my precious belongings, which were scattered on the beach, on board her. As soon as she floated again I set sail, and soon came to an anchor in the quiet little bay I had chosen for my home.

After searching the island, I came to the conclusion that it had never been inhabited, and that most likely it was one of the many small islands which abound in the Pacific, not very far from Otahitai. This I judged from the course I had steered, after making due allowances for leeway and current, which latter, I found, set in strong here from the north.

I made up my mind to lay in a good stock of dried fish, dried birds, eggs, fruit, and fresh water; and then made another start in my little ship, hoping either to be picked up by a whaling or trading vessel, or to reach one of the neighbouring islands, whence I would have a chance of getting a passage to Sydney or some other port.

But in my efforts of provisioning for my voyage, I was greatly aided by finding in the locker of the boat a tinder-box and flint, as, with the help of these, I soon had a fire, in the smoke of which I dried a large supply of fish and birds. I also boiled a large number of eggs very hard, and in a few days had enough food to last me two or three months. I filled my water-cask also; and this was the most troublesome job I had, for it being a good-sized one, I had to carry a bale-canful at a time from the stream to the boat, which I had fastened alongside the rocks I mentioned, about a hundred yards off, so that I could get to her in any tide without swimming.

At last I had all prepared for my voyage, and on the 13th of September I made a start. I was in good spirits, and had little fear of not being picked up; but, for all that, I must say that as I saw the little island where I had been so well off gradually grow "small by degrees and beautifully less," I was strongly tempted to turn back, and take my chance of some ship coming past and rescuing me. However, I fought against this feeling; and well for me that I did, as I now feel pretty certain the island I had left is one which is seldom seen, and is not marked on the charts.

I have very little more to tell you.

Four days after I left the island I sighted a sail, and was soon alongside. The ship proved to be a whaler, and bound to New Zealand. They gave me a passage and treated me well. When I landed at Dunedin about three weeks ago, I was in a sad condition—no clothes excepting a few rags, and no money to buy any. The skipper of the ship very kindly offered to lend me a few pounds; but I could not see taking the poor fellow's cash, knowing that most probably I should never see him again to repay him. I fear, however, I must have done so after all—for I looked such a ruffian in my rags that no one would employ me—if I had not met with Stevens there, who, like the good fellow he is, took pity on me, and hired me for this job.

"Gammon!" said Stevens. "I wanted a hand, and you wanted a job, that was all."

"And," continued Bill, not noticing the interruption, "gave me a new rig-out as well."

"Well, Bill," I said, "you have had a rough time of it, and, I should think, have had enough of searching for buried treasures."

"Not at all," replied Bill, quickly. "On the contrary, as soon as I can get enough money scraped together to pay my way to Panama, I'm off to join the *Vesper*. I wrote to Panama to my mates there, before leaving Dunedin, to say I was safe, and would join them as soon as I was able; and I also wrote to my friends in England, telling them to send me the needful. If I could find a ship going there direct, I'd work my passage to save time, for I don't want my friends to find the 'swag' without me."

"By the powers," cried Pat, "I've two minds to join you, my boy, if you'll have me. If we found nothing, we would have a good spree anyhow, you know. I've got a little pile saved up, and have been looking out for some spec—not one of your slow-going four and a half per cent. affairs, but something that would work you into a fortune fifty miles an hour. A sort of 'make a spoon or spoil a horn' business."

"Come, by all means, Pat," replied Bill. "I'll guarantee that you will have a fair share of what we find—if we are lucky enough to find anything—in proportion to whatever you put into the Co. And we could start away as soon as we had finished this driving job, and perhaps find the *Vesper*

at Panama, for they were to be there in January for stores and letters. Your money would pay our expenses, and enable us to start without loss of time."

"Well, I will think it over; and," added Pat, "you must give one all the information you can, and the reason you have for supposing there is anything hidden there worth hunting for."

TABLE TALK.

ANOTHER great writer has paid the debt of nature. Full of industry and energy almost to the last day of his life, Lord Lytton has left behind him his last new novel, "Kenelm Chillingly," ready for publication at an early date. It will be read with still greater interest than would have been the case had its distinguished author lived to see its production. It is a legacy instead of a gift. That the master-hand had lost no jot of its cunning is sufficiently attested by the success of "The Coming Race," which—following a custom he had—Lord Lytton published anonymously. The secret was well kept. He had well earned the right of being interred in the national mausoleum at Westminster. A faithful portrait of the deceased nobleman and man of letters was published recently in our pages.

THE JOURNAL that represents the book-selling and publishing interests in the United States has recently summed up the results of the year. "We have come to the end of another year of bookselling," says the *Guide*, "and the lesson of the year, so far as we can judge, is that Americans want cheap books. The tendency of prices in all departments has been downward during the past two years, and the necessity of consulting the popular demand in this respect was never more apparent than at the present time." This is precisely what is taking place in England. If a paper is to have a large circulation, its price must be a penny. Literature of some sort is a necessity, not a luxury, nowadays. But it must be cheap. As a nation, the English are not large book-buyers—the circulating libraries supplying the new books on terms that are probably thought more advantageous than buying them outright, even when the published price is four or five shillings. In the States, the principal classes of book-buyers are thus

divided:—"We think that this is necessarily true of a nation of book-buyers, in which the cultivated and professional classes are neither wealthy nor numerous. A very large proportion of the books sold in this country are bought for children, and among these we do not include school-books. Of the remainder, many are bought to fill up small private libraries and for gifts, and the remainder may be credited to those who buy for their own personal information or amusement. It is the latter class which must be depended upon to buy the books which are published in superior style upon their merits and at liberal prices; and when its members and resources in this country are considered, it is a small cause for wonder that the booksellers cry out that they cannot sell anything but cheap books." And pretty much the same state of affairs exists in the home market.

THE ATTACKS of ladies on the medical profession have called forth a protest from the *Lancet*, which takes this form:—"It has often seemed to us hard that the medical profession should have exclusively to bear the brunt of invasion by ambitious ladies, who feel dissatisfied with the sphere of duty usually assigned to them by convention, if not by nature. It is not, therefore, without some sense of gratification that we hear that the bar is now to be assailed. We are informed that a lady has applied, or is about to apply, to the benchers of the Inns of Court, with the intention of keeping terms for the bar. Our own main objection to ladies entering the medical profession is that it is unfitted to them. We shall leave others to say how far the bar is likely to afford field for the exercise of female talents." For our own part, we are of opinion that the bar would give the ladies an opportunity they have not at present got of showing their eloquence and learning; but we are mistaken in our estimate of lawyers if they ever give them a chance of doing it in their courts.

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Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

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NEW SERIES.

No. 267.

February 8, 1873.

Price 2d.

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A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XV.



HIL, you see, was born for better things. His heart was open to all noble impulses, as his eye and his ear were attuned to all harmonies of colour and sound. He had a quick appreciation—could take a broad view of things. He knew his own powers; for men no more really deceive themselves on the score of intellect than women on that of beauty. If a man has brains, he knows it. I reserve the rights of those that are not clever and know it, and pretend to be and are proud of their pretensions. These are the men who go about the world with all the letters of the alphabet after their names, imposing more upon themselves than on the credulous public. There is yet another difference to be made. Some few men are proud of the *εὐρύγεια*, and many men are

proud of the *δύραμις*. The pride of potentiality lingers long after the power of real work has altogether gone, long after the regret that tinges the first twenty years of an idle man's life. You may see, at Oxford and Cambridge, old men who walk erect and proud, still flushed with the triumphs they achieved as boys, and proud still as men; though their strength has been measured against no other competitors, and in no larger battle-field, and though the men they once defeated have long since conquered in far greater struggles, while they have grown rusty over the combination port.

Philip was now at the age when regret is strongest. At no time do the possibilities of life appear so splendid as at twenty-five, or is the conscience quicker to reproach us for wasted opportunities. But, after all, what was he to do? Life is but a vague thing to a young subaltern of distinct ambitions, not clearly seeing what glorious path to take up. Often enough it becomes a merely ignoble thing; meaning billiards, betting, brandy and soda, *et talia*. In Phil's case, the life he led was telling on his face, broadening his features, giving them a coarse expression. Our lives are stamped upon our faces. Does there not come a time in every good man's life when the hardest and unloveliest of faces softens into beauty by reason of the victory within? Do not buy a "nose machine," unlovely reader. Have patience, and aim at the highest things; and one day your face, too, shall be beautiful. As for Adonis, if he had lived the life of men about town, his face would have been coarse as theirs before the age of thirty.

The coloured blood had something to do with it. It helped to make Philip at once sensitive, eager of distinction, and vain. But not everything. Fain would I put it all down to colour. Mighty comforting thing as it is to us white men to reflect on our superiority, we must be careful about the theory. We may be the aristocracy of

Nature. To be sure, the creature who walks about in the similitude of man, with the leg in the middle of his foot; whose calf is in front, and shin behind; whose lips are thick; whose hair is woolly; whose nose is flat; whose brain is small in front and big behind; who has had every chance, and has clearly shown that he can do nothing so well as the white man—the full-blooded negro, I say, must be regarded as a distant cousin, a poor relation of humanity, and not a “brudder” at all. But, as for the mulatto class, I don’t know. Take a good quadroon mother, and a good white father, and I really cannot see why the resulting octoroon is a whit inferior to our noble selves—the aristocrats by colour.

But the influence of colour is always bad. It helped to make Philip inferior to himself. Let it be remembered about our Phil, the backslider, that, till he was twelve years old and more, he had been accustomed to look on colour as the outward mark of a degraded race.

It is all part of the same question. Take the heir of all the Talbots—I mean nothing personal to the heir of this distinguished house. Rear him in pride of birth, in contempt for lowborn people, in ideas of the responsibilities and dignities of rank—you will turn out a creature whom the whole world cannot match for pride, self-respect, self-reliance; and the virtues of courage, pluck, and endurance, which depend on these.

But take the little *Echo* boy. Suppose he had been subjected from infancy to the same teaching and treatment, would there have been any difference?

Mr. MacIntyre would have replied—“I vara much doot it.”

“The future of a boy, sir,” Venn said, one evening, “may be entirely prophesied from an observation of his early habits and prejudices. I have gathered, for instance, a few particulars from the boyhood of great men, which throw a wonderful light upon their after-career. When I tell you, for example, that Mr. John Stuart Mill, early in life, had to submit his nails to a disfiguring course of bitter almonds to cure him of biting them, you feel at once that you understand the whole of the philosopher’s works.”

“I do not, for one,” said Jones.

“I have also heard,” he went on, “that Mr. Gladstone was birched more than once for cutting Sunday chapel at Eton. Remark

that the years pass over his head, and presently he disestablishes the Irish Church. And I believe it is a fact that Mr. Disraeli, as a boy, was wont to sit on a rail and suck sweets. The analogies between these small circumstances and the after-lives of these men are subtle, perhaps; but, once pointed out, ought to be clear even to Jones.”

It was on another occasion that Venn showed how an apology might be made for a criminal on higher ground than that reached by the evidence. He delivered his “*Oratio pro Peccatore*” one night in wig and gown. The following is a portion:—

“Circumstances, my lud, have been against my unhappy client. Brought up under the contempt, or fancied contempt, of society, he early manifested his superiority to the ordinary trammels imposed on the thick-headed by becoming a prig. I do not mean assistant masters of Rugby or Marlborough, who are all prigs, but the common prig of the London streets. From a prig of Holborn, the transition was easy to being a prig on a larger scale and in a more extended sphere. Step by step, my lud and gentlemen of the jury, you may trace everything back, not to the want of education, because my client was taught in a National School, and possesses even now a knowledge of the Kings of Israel; but to the fact that, in the circles wherein he should have moved, his parentage was despised—his father, gentlemen of the jury, having been a barrister-at-law, and his mother at one time a lady of the ballet.”

And with this as a preface, he would go on to defend his client.

You may leave out the preceding, if you like. But I would rather you read it.

Meantime, it is the month of May—

“Ce fut en très doux tenz de Mai
Que di cuer gai,
Vont cis oiseillon chantant,”

as the old French song has it. Laura has met Philip in all about six or seven times—always with another promise of secrecy. She is to marry Philip. That is agreed upon between them. It will please Mr. Venn. Meantime, she is trying to understand her lover. He is kind to her; but not with the tenderness of her guardian, to whom she compares him. He is not gentle with her; but passionate, fitful, uncertain of temper—being, indeed, in constant conflict with himself.

Then he was suspicious and jealous. Worse than all, he was always asking her if she loved him more, if she loved him at all, if she ever could love him. It wearied and teased her—this talk of love. "What did it mean?" she asked herself over and over again; but could find no answer.

"I don't know, Philip," she said. "What is the use of always asking?"

"You must know if you love me, Laura."

"How am I to know?"

"Do you love Mr. Venn?"

"Oh, yes!"—her face lit up at once; "but I don't feel at all like that—oh, not in the least bit. If that is love, why, I suppose I do not love you."

Philip ground his teeth.

"Always Mr. Venn," he growled. "Tell me, Laura, do you like to be with me?"

"Yes, it is pleasant—so long as you are in a good temper—to talk to you. I like you a great deal better than when I saw you first. I don't think you are such a good man as you ought to be, because I have heard you swear, which is vulgar."

"You shall make me good, Laura, when we are married."

"And when will that be?" she asked, suddenly. "Because, you see, I will not go on having secrets from Mr. Venn; and I must tell him soon."

"Then you will give me up," said Philip, gloomily.

"Very well," she returned, calmly; "that will be better than deceiving Mr. Venn. To be sure, I am only deceiving him with the idea of pleasing him. Of course he will be pleased." She sighed. "If only I felt *quite* sure! But he told me so distinctly that I was to marry a gentleman. Oh, he will be pleased. And I am sure he will like you."

"Only wait a little longer, my dear."

"No, Philip—I will not wait any longer. We must be married at once, or I will tell Mr. Venn all about it. I cannot bear to have secrets from him. I believe, after all, you are only laughing at me, because I am not a lady."

The tears of vexation came into her eyes.

Philip's face was very gloomy. It was in his moments of anger that the cloud fell upon his face which altered his expression, and changed him almost to a negro. It was then that his nostrils seemed to broaden, his lips to project, his cheeks to darken.

"Tell him, then," he returned; "and good-bye."

He turned on his heel—it was under the trees in Kensington Gardens. She sat down and looked at him. There was no anger in her breast for the *sprda injuria formæ*: none at the loss of a love, none at the destruction of an idol. For she had no love. Philip Durnford had never touched her heart. To please Mr. Venn—let us say it again and again—to please Mr. Venn, who wanted to see her married to a gentleman, and because she was wholly, utterly ignorant of the world and innocent of its ways, she listened to Philip's pleading, and almost offered herself to him in marriage. What did marriage mean? She knew nothing. How was she to know? She spoke to no one but Hartley Venn. She never read novels or love poetry. Her life was as secluded as that of any nun.

Her lover was three or four yards off, when his expression changed as suddenly to his old one. He wavered, and half turned.

"Philip," cried Laura, "come here."

He turned, and stood before her.

"I think I have made a great mistake. Perhaps Mr. Venn would not be pleased. Let us say good-bye, and go away from each other for ever. You will soon forget me; and before I listen to any one again, I will take Mr. Venn's advice."

She spoke in a businesslike tone, as if the whole thing was a mere matter of expediency; and shook her head with an air of the most owl-like wisdom, and looked more beautiful than ever. It was one of the characteristics of this young lady that she had as many different faces as there are thoughts in the brain, for she changed with each. I think her best was when she was playing in the evening—far away, in imagination, in some Paradise of her own—alone with Mr. Venn.

Philip's blood leaped up in his veins. All the love and desire he had ever entertained for her seemed multiplied tenfold. He seized her hand and held it fast.

"My Laura!" he cried, "my little bird, my pet! Do you think I will let you go? At least, not till I have had another chance. It is all finished—all the waiting and hoping. I am ready to marry you whenever you like. You shall name your own day, and you shall tell Mr. Venn after we are married. Only keep the secret till then."

"How long am I to wait?" asked the girl.

"A week—ten days, not more. We must make our preparations. I must get you all sorts of things, darling. I love you

too well to let you go in a fit of passion. If I have been ill-tempered at times, it is because I am sometimes troubled with many things of which you know nothing. Make a little allowance for me. You, at least, shall never be troubled, Laura, my pet. My happiness is in your hands. Give it back to me; and, in return, all my life shall be spent in trying to please you."

"You frighten me," she said. "You are so passionate. Why do you hold my hand so hard? Look here, Philip—I will do this. To-day is Wednesday. I will meet you and marry you next Wednesday, if you like. If you do not marry me then, you shall not marry me at all. And now, good-bye till Wednesday morning."

She tripped away, without her heart beating a single pulsation faster; while he was left trembling in every limb.

"Wednesday!" He began to reflect how people were married. "Wednesday. A week. And there is everything to be got ready."

He went to the City, to his agent's, and drew five hundred pounds.

"It is my duty, Mr. Durnford," said the agent, "to remind you that you have only a thousand pounds left. Although it is invested at ten per cent., a hundred a year is not a large income."

"You are quite right," said Philip. "It is not, indeed—too small to be considered, almost. But I must have the five hundred."

He lodged it at Cox's; and then went to a milliner's shop and ordered a complete trousseau, to be ready packed in a few days. They wanted to try things on; but he picked out a young lady in the shop of about Laura's dimensions, and told them to try the things on her.

After that, he began to investigate the great marriage question, being as yet little conversant with legal procedure of any kind. He knew that you might go to church, or that you might go to a registrar's office; so he found out the office of a registrar, and asked what he had to do.

It appeared to be very simple. You must reside for a space of three weeks in a parish—that had already been done; but, which made it impossible, he must have the names posted up in the office for a fortnight. And so he went and bought a special licence.

He went home radiant with hope and

happiness, and spent a quiet evening alone, communing with the future.

The next day he went to see how the trousseau was getting on, and bought a wedding ring. Then he ordered several new suits of clothes to be made at once, and a large stock of linen, with an undefined feeling that married life meant everything new.

That was Thursday's work.

Then came Friday, and, with Friday, a visit from Mr. MacIntyre.

"You will not spend many more evenings with me," said Phil; "so sit down and make yourself comfortable."

"And wherefore not?" asked his tutor.

"Because I'm going to be married next Wednesday."

"Gude guide us!" The good man turned quite pale. "Next Wednesday? Is all settled? It is Laura, of course—I mean Miss Collingwood."

"Of course it is Laura."

"And how are you to be married?"

"By special licence."

Mr. MacIntyre looked as if he would ask another question, but refrained; and presently went his way.

On Tuesday evening, Mr. MacIntyre looked up quietly, and asked—

"What church are you going to be married in?"

Phil turned pale.

"Idiot that I am! I never thought about the church at all."

CHAPTER XVI.

UNDER ordinary circumstances, Lollie," said Venn, on Tuesday morning, when the child came round—"under ordinary circumstances, the middle-aged man awakes in the morning with the weary feeling of a day's work before him." He always spoke as if he was oppressed with the duties of labour. "By some lucky accident, I feel this morning as if the innocent mirth of childhood was back again. I fear nothing. I hope everything. Two courses are therefore open to us."

"What two courses?" asked the girl—always watchful of Venn's words, and never quite able to follow the conclusions to which they led him.

"I ought, I suppose, to take advantage of this unusual flow of spirits, and write something with the real glow of joy upon it. My works are, perhaps, too uniformly meditative. I dare say you have remarked it."

"I think they are beautiful, all of them," replied the flatterer.

"Ah, Lollie, I ought to be a happy man. I have an audience—limited at present, to be sure—which appreciates me. Mohammed had his Cadijah. But there is another course open to us. See the sun upon the leaves of the two trees in the court. Listen to the sparrows chirping with renewed vigour. They know that the hilarious worm will be tempted forth to enjoy the sun. The purring of the basking cat is almost audible if you open the window. The paper boy whistles across the square. The policemen move on with a lighter step. The postman bounds as he walks. The laundresses put off their shawls. Lollie, what do these things mean?"

"They mean going into the country, do they not?" she replied, catching his meaning.

"They do, child. They mean Epping Forest. We will take the train to Loughton and walk to Epping. They mean a little dinner at the Cock, and a pint of Moselle. They mean strolling through the wood to Theydon Bois, and coming home in the evening with roses in our cheeks."

Another time, Lollie would have jumped for joy. Now she only looked up and smiled.

"What is the matter, my little girl?" asked Hartley, taking her face in his hands. "For a fortnight past you have not been in your usual spirits. To-day you are pale and worn. Are you ill, Lollie?"

"No," she cried, bursting into tears, "I am not ill; only—only—you are so good to me."

His own eyes filled as he stooped and kissed her forehead.

"You are nervous this morning, little one—you must go to Epping, that is clear."

"It is not only that: it is something else."

"What else, Lollie? You can tell me."

"It is my secret, Mr. Venn."

"Well, then, Lollie, if that is all, I can wait for this precious secret. So be happy again."

"It is a secret that concerns you. I think it will make you happier—you said once that it would. Oh, I wish I might tell you—I wish you would let me."

"Little Impatience! And what sort of a secret would that be which I know already? Do you remember the man who whispered his to the winds? Never tell a secret, child;

because the birds of the air may carry it about."

"I have been so unhappy about it," the girl went on, through her tears. "I can't sleep for thinking of it. Oh, you will be pleased—I know you will. But I wish I could tell you. I will—I don't care who is offended. Mr. Venn, I am going——"

"Stop, Lollie," he replied, putting his finger to her lips—"don't tell me. See, I give you perfect control over your secret till to-morrow. I refuse to listen—I am deaf. If you try to tell me I shall begin to sing, and then the nearest cows will fall ill, and the calves will lie down and expire."

She sighed, and was silent. Alas! if only she had spoken. Fate was against her.

They went to Loughton, and took that walk through the forest which only the East-end Cockneys love. In the long glades which stretch right and left the hawthorn was in full blossom; the tender green of the new leaves, freshly coloured, and all of different hues; the soft breath of the young summer, the silence and repose, fell on the girl's spirit and soothed her. For the moment she forgot the secret, and almost felt happy. And yet it lay at her heart. Her life—she knew so much—was going to be changed; how much she could not tell. The life of two would be, she thought, a life of three. It was what Mr. Venn had wished for her; and yet—and yet—there was the shade of a danger upon her—a foreboding of calamity which she tried in vain to throw off. Venn poured out his treasures of fancy—those half thought-out ideas and half-seen analogies which filled his brain, and evaded him when he tried to put them on paper. But they fell, for once, on unfruitful ground. She caught some of them, or only half caught them; and then talk grew languid.

"My spirits of this morning seem to have failed me," he cried, impatiently—

"Not seldom, clad in radiant hue,
Deceitfully goes forth the morn."

A spiritual shower has fallen, and we have no umbrella. What is it, child?" he asked, impatiently. "Why are we so silent and sad to-day? Let us be happy. Are we drenched with the shower?"

Lollie half laughed, and they walked on. Presently they came upon a woman, toiling along with a baby in her arms, and two children toddling after them. As they

came up to her, the woman turned and struck one of them sharply, for lagging.

"Don't do that, my good creature," said Venn. "Perhaps the little one is tired."

"He's tired and hungry too, sir," she replied; "but I've got to get him to Epping, for all that, and walk he must."

"Poor little man!" said Venn. "Say, are you very tired?"

The child was evidently worn out.

"We are going the same way," he said.

"I will carry him for you."

"You, sir?—and a gentleman and all!"

"Why not? Come, my boy!"

He lifted the little one in his arms.

"Lollie, I am not going to let you carry the other. He is big enough to walk."

"Ah, yes, miss—don't 'ee now," said the woman. "He's strong enough—aint you, Jackey?"

Then they all walked away together—Venn talking to the woman, and she telling her little story; how her husband had got work at Epping, and she was walking all the way from town with her babies.

"I had a comfortable place, sir," she said, "six years ago; and little I thought then of the hardships I should have to undergo. God knows we've been half-starving sometimes."

"And are you sorry you married?" asked Lollie.

"Nay, miss, a woman is never sorry she married," replied the poor wife. "My man is a real good sort, unless now and then when it's the drink tempts him. And then I've the children, you see. Ah! well, sir; God gives us the good and the bad together. But never you think, miss, that a woman is sorry she married."

"Truly," said Venn, "marriage is a continual sacrament."

"Are you married yourself, sir?"

"I am not," he replied, gravely. "So far I am only half a man; and now I shall never marry, I fear."

Lollie looked up in his face, over which lay that light cloud of melancholy which alternated in Venn with the sweet smile of his mobile lips. She walked on pondering. "No woman ever sorry for being married." There was comfort!

"You are happy when you are with your husband?" she asked, presently.

The woman turned sharply upon her.

"Of course, I am happy with my Ben," she said. "Happiness with us is not made

of the same sort of stuff as with you rich folks."

"I am not a rich folk," said the girl, smiling.

"Well, well—never mind my sharpness, miss. You're one of the kind folks, and that's all I care about."

She trudged on, talking to herself, as such women do, between her lips. Venn was behind them now, talking to the boy in his arms; and so they reached Epping. At the outskirts of the long town, where the cottages begin, the woman insisted on the boy being put down, and began to thank them. Venn gave her a little present of a few shillings, and left her trudging along with the children.

"There goes our Moselle, Lollie," he said, with a sigh. "Always some fresh disappointment. I had set my heart on that Moselle for you."

"Oh, Mr. Venn! As if I should be so selfish."

"All the same," he grumbled. "It was a stroke of my usual bad luck, meeting that woman."

The bottle of Moselle made its appearance, in spite of her; but even the sparkle of the wine failed to raise Lollie's spirits to their usual level. The girl was profoundly dejected. Venn tried the wildest talk, told her the wildest stories; but in vain. It grew close to the hour of the last train—the Great Eastern, with its usual liberality, having fixed the last train at eight, so as to prevent everybody from enjoying the evening in the Forest. They walked together to the station—silent, dejected, and unhappy.

"I wish—oh, I wish to-morrow was over!" the girl sighed, when they were alone in the railway carriage.

"Does that secret worry you, Lollie? Is that the wretched cause of your depression? Forget it—put it out of your mind."

"Let me tell it you."

"Nonsense, child," he laughed; "as if I wanted to know. Think of Midas, as I told you this morning. You shall tell me now."

"Tell me once more," she said, "what you would like me most of all to do."

He hesitated. Had he followed the promptings of his own heart, he would have said—

"To marry me, Lollie; to go away with me from London; to live together, never to

get tired, in some little country place—the world forgetting, by the world forgot.”

If he had but said so!—for it was not yet too late, and the girl was yearning to tell him all.

“I think, child,” he said, slowly, after a pause, “there is but one thing I really want you to do. I should like, before all else, to see you married happily. Sukey settled that for us, you know. Sukey was always remarkable for her strong common sense. She had all my brother Bob’s, poor fellow, and a good deal of mine. I haven’t seen Sukey now for two months. Let us go there to-morrow.”

“Not to-morrow,” said Lollie. “Do you really mean—really and truly mean what you say? You would like to see me married?”

Heavens, how blind the man is! He does not see that the girl’s whole heart is his; that after all those years her nature is responsive to his own; that she has but one thought, one affection, one passion—though she knows it not—the love of Hartley Venn.

“Mean it?” he says, with his tender smile. “Of course I mean it. Recollect what the woman said to-day. You have seen how love may survive poverty, hunger, misery; and rise triumphant over all. Think what love may be when there is no misery to beat it down.”

“Love—yes, love. They are always talking about love. I mean marriage.”

“They go together, Lollie.”

“Does—” she checked the name that rose to her lips—“do people, when they talk of marriage, always mean love.”

“They are supposed to do so, Lollie. On the other hand, when they talk of love, they do not always— Ah, here is Fenchurch-street.”

No more was said that night. It was nine o’clock. The girl went up to his room and made him tea; and at half-past nine she put on her hat.

“To-morrow, Mr. Venn—ah! to-morrow—I shall tell you my secret.”

“Sleep soundly, little bird, and forget your secret. What time am I to know it?”

“I don’t quite know. I should think, in the afternoon.”

“Very well, then; I shall stay in from one till four, and if you do not come then I shall suppose the secret is not ready. Will that do? Good night, Lollie dear.”

He stooped to kiss her forehead; but she

took his face in her hands, and kissed his lips almost passionately.

“Always believe,” she said, “even if you are not pleased, that I love you, and am so grateful to you that nothing can tell it. Always believe I love you, and hoped to please you.”

And so slipped away, and was gone.

Did Hartley have no suspicion? None—none—none. He was not, you see, a man “about town.” He did not think or suspect evil. Least of all could he suspect evil in the case of his little girl. And that she should take his words so literally as to marry a man in order to please him would have struck him as beyond all belief.

And yet it was exactly what she was going to do.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MR. GILBERT'S NEW COMEDY.

A MODERN writer has remarked that literary and artistic works are often appreciated by different people for very different reasons. The vulgar applaud “Hamlet” vigorously, on account of the powerful dramatic situations contained in it. A more thoughtful class recognise the close and subtle study of character which pervades the play. Others, again, perceive its delicate fancies and its wealth of poesy. And there are yet others who, realizing all these things fully, are conscious of higher and nobler purposes beyond—of a profound philosophy grappling with some of the huge questions of our inner being, and struggling with the sea of doubt which ever and anon dashes against the human soul.

In such a work as this, however, we have all been led to look for serious teaching, and most people do their best to seek it out; but in the case of writers of less pretensions, and especially of those of the present day, the majority of readers and hearers gather up only such ideas as lie upon the surface, and take no trouble to ascertain what else the author has desired to convey.

A new “fairy comedy,” from the pen of Mr. W. S. Gilbert, has lately been produced at the Haymarket Theatre; and there are many reasons why the public is to be congratulated on the appearance and success of such a work. We have lately suffered from a severe attack of sensation and burlesque on the brain; and, indeed, the symptoms have scarcely yet disappeared. Still we are artisti-

cally convalescent; and can point to the success of various "legitimate" dramas at the present moment as warranting us in hoping great things for the future. The Lyceum, for example, is nightly thronged under the attraction of a play which can hardly be said to have any plot at all, and which depends for its success entirely upon the excellence of the acting. And it is really refreshing nowadays to witness a fairy comedy in which all the fairies wear long dresses—one of the most charming of them appearing in a robe which not only extends to her heels, but also reaches to her throat. Throughout his play, Mr. Gilbert shows a desire to depend for approbation upon the neatness of his dialogue and a refined treatment of his subject, rather than on the more usual modern resources of shifting scenery, gorgeous costumes, and the common "topical" claptrap of burlesque. For this we ought to be thankful; but we have a right to expect something more than mere negative harmlessness from a writer of Mr. Gilbert's reputation; and we believe that he has endeavoured, in the present case, to say to his audience something worth remembering, as well as to afford amusement for an idle evening.

Most of our readers have doubtless read some account of the comedy, and it will now suffice to refer very briefly to its leading incidents. The pure and sinless inhabitants of a fairy cloudland are represented as summoning from the "Wicked World" beneath them, three of its mortal inhabitants—partly from curiosity, partly with some vague idea of doing them good, and partly from a desire to ascertain the nature and effects of the wondrous earthly love which none but mortals can inspire, and of which the fame has reached even these ethereal regions. In due course, two blunt and barbarous Gothic knights, and a henchman, are borne up from below. The Fairy Queen, Selenè, immediately becomes passionately enamoured of one of the knights; and, unfortunately, one of her companions (Darine) falls madly in love with him too. The other characters are quite subordinate in interest to these principal personages. None of the fairies have any idea of conventional proprieties, and proffer their love in an undisguised fashion which somewhat surprises their mundane visitors. The knights care for nothing but the pleasure of the moment, and their reputation for bravery;

and Sir Ethais accepts the devotion of Selenè and Darine alternately, without the slightest compunction, or the least concern for the consequences of his flirtation. So the seeds of discord and sorrow are sown in this fair garden of the clouds, and bear their bitter fruit; and after the mortal strangers have departed, and their influence has died away, the fairies one and all decline the gift of earthly love, when the King of Fairyland offers it to them as the greatest boon he can bestow.

Of course, the first business of an author who writes for the stage is to produce a good "acting play;" and the first subject of the critic's inquiry should be how far he has fulfilled this condition. It is here that we think the principal faults of Mr. Gilbert's play will be found. It has a semblance of a somewhat intricate plot; but at the conclusion we find the characters *in statu quo*—the whole affair seeming to have had no particular result. Again, there is no suggestion that fairies are not endowed with memory; and it is hard to account for the absence of any after-glow of passion and jealousy when the knights have departed—the more so as it is expressly stated that earthly love lives in the heart long after the object of it has been removed. And the subordinate characters are so passionless and altogether un-human, that we can feel no interest in them or their affairs. But, on the other hand, the device—which has been before employed by Mr. Gilbert—of creating characters quite ignorant of the usual forms and restraints of civilized society, gives rise to very quaint and comical situations, and affords scope for much good acting. We quote an example:—

Sel. If you will be our pupils, you must give Some token of submission to our will.
No doubt you have some form of fealty.

Eth. When man desires to show profound respect—
To indicate most forcibly his own Inferiority, he always puts His arm round the respected object's waist, And drawing her (or him) towards him, thus, Places a very long and tender kiss On his (or her) face—as the case may be.

Sel. That form is not in vogue in Fairyland. Still, as it holds on earth, no doubt 'twill have Far greater weight with you, poor sons of earth, Than any formula we could impose.

Phyl. Its weight is overpowering. (*About to kiss.*)
Sel. But stay—

We would not wrest this homage from you, sir; Or give it willingly or not at all.

Eth. Most willingly, fair maid, we give it you.
Sel. Good. Then proceed.

The love, the jealousy, the indignation of Selenè are expressed in speeches of such force and power, that, aided by the elocution of Miss Robertson, they produce a very fine effect. Whether these merits will outweigh the obvious dramatic faults, sufficiently to secure for the piece a long run, remains to be seen. But whatever may be its value for the purposes of acting, there can be no doubt that the comedy possesses much literary excellence. We may quote the account given by the Fairy Queen of herself and her companions:—

"Our Fairyland rests on a cloud, which floats
Hither and thither as the breezes will.
At times a mighty city's at our feet,
At times a golden plain; and then the sea,
Dotted with ships and rocks and sunny isles.
We see the world; yet, saving that it is
A very wicked world, we know it not—
We hold no converse with its denizens;
But on the lands o'er which our island hangs
We shed fair gifts of plenty and of peace,
Health and contentment, charity, goodwill;
Drop tears of love upon the thirsty earth,
And shower fair waters on the growing grain:
This is our mission."

And then she speaks of the

"—black and angry thunder clouds
That spit their evil fire at flocks and herds,
And shake with burly laughter as they watch
The trembling shepherds count their shrivelled
dead."

But we may go farther than mere graces of diction. The author very plainly tells us that his story has a moral. With infinite self-complacency, the fairies speak of the wickedness of the world which lies beneath them. "What are sins?" asks one of them; and Selenè replies—

"Evils of which we hardly know the name.
There's vanity—a quaint fantastic vice,
Whereby a mortal takes much credit for
The beauty of his face and form, and claims
As much applause for loveliness as though
He had designed himself!

• • • • •
Ambition, too, the vice of clever men
Who seek to rise at others' cost; nor heed
Whose wings they cripple, so that they may soar.
Malice—the helpless vice of helpless fools,
Who, as they cannot rise, hold others down,
That they, by contrast, may appear to soar.

• • • • •
Sins so incredible, so mean, so vast,
Our nature stands appalled when it attempts
To grasp their terrible significance."

With a half-contemptuous pity the perpetrators of these crimes are discussed. It is treated as a marvel that such wretched

beings should continue to bear their miserable existence, when they themselves might their quietus make; that they should "live, and live, and seem to like to live;" and since they are so degraded, it is proposed to try and do them good by allowing some of them to contemplate the purity and virtue existing above the clouds—a contemplation which, it is assumed, cannot fail to awaken first admiration and then repentance. But no sooner are the mortals introduced than the innocence disappears, and a variety of evil passions take up their reign instead. The Fairy Queen is constrained to say, when the brief delirium is over—

"Behold is there so wide a gulf between
The humbled wretch who, being tempted, falls,
And that good man who rears an honoured head
Because temptation hath not come to him?
Shall we from our enforced security
Deal mercilessly with poor mortal man,
Who struggles, single-handed, to defend
The demon-leaguered fortress of his soul?"

Of all great lessons, this of charitable judgment of the erring is, perhaps, the hardest to be learnt. The rich will do well to take Mr. Gilbert's story to heart in forming their estimate of the poor; and the poor too often need a similar warning in their bitter experience of the faults and failures of the rich.

We are all liable to forget that it is often nothing but the absence of opportunities of sin which makes the outward saint.

But the author of "The Wicked World" has still something more to teach us. We must, perforce, take our planet and the people on it as we find them. But however bad they may appear to be, there shines forth upon them—above all the strife and toil and failure and utter vanity of life—the radiance of *love*. Mr. Gilbert has taken some pains to tell us what love really is. He probably intends the Fairy Queen, Selenè, to be understood as a type of true and pure womanhood. At first sight, his fancy of dissociating her from all conventional restraints appears to be merely a device for obtaining amusement, and involving her in various quaint entanglements with her new friends, and as such we have already referred to it. The idea, however, serves also a much more important purpose. No ordinary woman could tell out all her heart in such a matter; but Selenè can with perfect purity expatiate upon her love, and display the very inmost longings of her soul. This is

how she describes the effects of love, when as yet she knows it only by report:—

"It nerves the wearied mortal with hot life,
And bathes his soul in hazy happiness.
The richest man is poor who hath it not,
And he who hath it laughs at poverty.
It hath no conqueror. When Death himself
Has worked his very worst, this love of theirs
Lives still upon the loved one's memory.
It is a strange enchantment, which invests
The most unlovely things with loveliness.
The maiden, fascinated by this spell,
Sees everything as she would have it be.
Her squalid cot becomes a princely home ;
Its stunted shrubs are groves of stately elms ;
The weedy brook that trickles past her door
Is a broad river fringed with drooping trees ;
And, of all marvels the most marvellous,
The coarse, unholy man who rules her love
Is a bright being, pure as we are pure ;
Wise in his folly, blameless in his sin ;
The incarnation of a perfect soul ;
A great and even glorious demi-god !"

When at length Selenè herself falls under the same great spell, the passion grows within her till it absorbs her whole being. Cheerfully she resigns her crown at the request of her discontented subjects, and, after a speech of exquisite pathos and generosity, places it on the head of her rival Darine. She will find her empire in the breast of Ethais. And though, when she discovers that she reigns not there, her anguish finds expression in reproaches—nay, even in curses—she soon learns that she is loving still.

"Forgive me, Ethais ; thou hast withdrawn
The very core and substance of thy love.
No matter ; give me but the empty husk,
And it will stay the famine of my heart."

What love like this is worth—how far it is worth while to try and win it, the author leaves us to judge. It is enough to call our attention to the fact of its existence amongst us.

But Mr. Gilbert's philosophy goes yet deeper. He tells us in the prologue that one of his purposes is to prove that love itself—even such love as he paints—is "not a blessing, but a curse." He is not afraid to say so ; for he knows that he has painted the picture in colours too brilliant to be dulled by any sombre rays which he may choose to cast upon it. He puts forward no mere paradox, or groundwork for display of ingenuity. It is sought to show that even on the highest and noblest joys of earth the "trail of the serpent" is to be discerned. In the love of Darine, and the general disturbance introduced with the

new emotion, this is set forth. Too often do we seek in earthly love not merely Paradise, but Highest Heaven ; and we need to be reminded that there is something even more excellent still : that we should be looking forward to a time when we may be—not fairies, indeed—but "as the angels which are in Heaven," and when we shall experience a love which will swallow up all other joys, and bring besides no cloud of sorrow in its train.

We wish that we could congratulate Mr. Gilbert as much upon the strictly dramatic merits of his comedy, as upon its literary and didactic qualities ; but in any case we sincerely hope that it may continue to be successful.

TIT FOR TAT.

FROM THE PERSIAN.

I MET a maid on yon hillside,
And she was fair to see—
"Give me a kiss, fair maid," I cried ;
"Give me a gift," said she.

"A gift within a purse I have,
The purse is in a pack ;
The purse in keeping lieth safe,
On my good charger's back.

"And my good charger cometh not
While on the hill I roam ;
He lieth in his stall, I wot—
My charger is at home."

"And yet thou'dst have a kiss, good sir ;
My lips would give it thee,
But they are locked full fast, good sir—
My mother has the key ;

"And my good mother is not here,
While on the hill I roam ;
Just as your trusty steed, good sir,
My mother is at home."

GORDON CAMPBELL.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—III.

ALL the next day, Pat and Bill discussed the "treasure" question, and the more Pat heard, the more he was inclined to join in the venture ; so much so, that I really believe, before night, he was as anxious to start at once as Bill was. It was just the wild, risky sort of adventure to suit him ; and from what Bill told us there did seem good reason for supposing there was some truth in the rumours.

We remained all that day on the banks of the river Hinds, resting the cattle, and employed ourselves most of the time in col-

lecting, from out of the dry river-bed, "tutu" roots for firewood; so that by evening we had got a high pile of them for the night's use.

These roots make a very pleasant, cheerful fire, but burn very quickly, so that a large quantity is required. So scarce is firewood in many parts of Canterbury, that tutu roots are dug and piled up to dry in stacks, and form the principal supply for cooking purposes. Coal, however, is more easily got than formerly, and is more generally used; but when the colony was young—that is to say, fifteen or twenty years ago—coal was very scarce, and I never remember having seen it used on a station, and very seldom in a dwelling-house, even in any of the towns.

That night, lying on the grass round the fire as usual, we were told the following story of "How Charlie Stevens got his Station."

HOW CHARLIE STEVENS GOT HIS STATION.

In the year 1853, I was living on a station in Victoria, between the Campaspu and the Goulburn rivers, about ninety miles from Melbourne, and between twenty and thirty miles from Forest Creek diggings. During that year many new diggings were discovered; and amongst them MacIvor, or, as it is now called, Heathcote, was one of the most successful and lasting. The station that I was on was only some twelve miles from MacIvor, and I have often ridden in search of horses or cattle over the spot where there now stands a large and prosperous town. Little thought I then that under my horse's feet lay buried countless treasures—more than Bill is ever likely to find in his "diggings" on the Cocoa Islands—or that such a lovely, quiet spot would, in a few days, almost a few hours, be converted into such a perfect Babel as can only exist in a digging township.

Shortly after MacIvor "broke out," my two eldest brothers determined to try their luck; and as it happened to be the slack time of the year—I think March was the month, but I am not certain—there was nothing to prevent their doing so. I was very anxious to go with them; but being too young—I was fourteen off—to dig, I had to content myself with extracting a promise that they would allow me to go and stay a week with them now and then; but that only on condition that I would make myself as useful as possible. You may guess

how delighted and excited I was the first time I went to stay with them. My brothers had got two other fellows as mates, and had a "claim" about a mile from the "camp," as the police tents were called. Their tent was not far from the mouth of the hole, close enough to guard against any one "jumping" their claim. "Jumping" was so common on MacIvor, that no matter how inconveniently situated your claim was, you could not put your tent too close to the mouth of the hole, unless you wished to find some "early worms" busy washing your "stuff" for you, some morning when you came to work.

"What on earth do you mean by 'jumping'?" asked Bill Walker.

"'Jumping' is slang for taking possession of another party's claim," replied Stevens.

And then resuming—

When I got to the diggings, I found my brothers had already found a bottom—that is to say, Bill, come to blue clay or rock, where the gold generally lies—and had washed out some few ounces of gold. They were in high spirits, and said they thought they had hit on a good vein of gold; but told me to be very careful to say nothing about their luck; and if any one asked me how they were doing, to say they were earning grub, and nothing more. Every night they hid the proceeds of the day's work in a hole under the tent, excepting a very small quantity, which they sold to pay expenses with, and to keep others from being suspicious; for in those days a man who stuck to one claim for any length of time, and sold no gold, was always suspected of having got a "dollop," and ran a pretty nearly certain chance of being stuck up in his tent and robbed—lucky if he was not shot as well.

Things went on this way for about six weeks, and "our party," as I will call it, had done remarkably well. My eldest brother, Harry, wished to send the gold by the gold escort to Melbourne; but to this the other three objected, on account of the expense, and advised making up a good strong escort of their own instead. It was, however, found impossible to get a sufficient number of men who could be depended on to form a private escort; so it was agreed to send all the gold they had by the next month's Government escort. It was fortu-

nate for them that they had delayed sending it; for that month's escort was robbed, and the gold all taken, of course. The bushrangers had put a lot of brushwood across the road, and hidden themselves on each side of the track amongst the scrub, so that the police could not see them. When the police came to the obstruction on the road, and stopped, the bushrangers fired at them, shooting one poor fellow dead and killing the pack horses. The remainder of the police galloped back to the diggings, leaving the gold, and glad to get off so easily.

This determined our party to keep their gold where it was, for a time, at least. This was a great mistake; for I have noticed that, after a more than usually open and bold robbery, such as that, was committed, things were quiet for some time on the diggings—perhaps because the bushrangers expected people to be more careful; but more likely the reason was that they found it wiser to go to fresh ground to work on, where the police would not be so much on the look-out.

About two months after this, I was staying with them again, and by hard persuasion had obtained permission to remain for a few weeks. My usual amusement was shooting ducks, pigeons, and parrots, or hunting kangaroos on the MacIvor hills. I used to get on my pony, Stumpy, a little chestnut, long, low, and very fast, and canter off to the Wild Duck Creek, which, as its name implies, was a famous place for ducks. Here I would tether Stumpy, and walk along the edge of the creek, shooting whatever came in my way. Sometimes I took my cattle dog, Tweed, with me, and went to the other side of the range to hunt kangaroos. My road, when I did this, was through what was at that time called the Lady's Pass, and up a creek, the name of which I have forgotten, on the banks of which stood a shepherd's hut. There I used to have a snack with the old hut-keeper, a poor old fellow who was quite mad, and not long out of the Yarra Bend, as the lunatic asylum in Melbourne is called. Poor George, his was a sad tale; but he has nothing to do with my story, so I need say no more about him now—some night I may give you his story as he told it to me.

One day, after I had left old George's hut, and was slowly riding up a valley close by the hut, called the Splitter's Gully, I met a man on horseback, who stopped and asked

me if I had seen any working bullocks. I told him where I had seen some, but he seemed in no hurry to go after them; and lighting his pipe, began to talk about the diggings; and after a little, asked me if I was the boy who was staying with Stevens's party. Pleased to let him know that I was connected with the diggings, I replied, "Yes."

"I hear they are doing well, although it seems they don't care to send their gold down to Melbourne by the escort," he said, in a careless sort of way.

True to my orders, I replied—

"They have not been earning much more than grub; and, only that they hope to do better, would have been off before now."

"None of your gammon, young un—I know better than that. But you are right not to blab," he said. "I don't wonder at their not caring to trust their swag to that precious humbugging escort, after the nice mess they made of it; but if I had a lot of gold, I'm hanged if I'd keep it in my tent long, there are too many bushranging gentlemen about for that. Don't you think so?"

Although he spoke so unconcernedly, I felt certain he was trying to pump me; so I thought the best thing to do was to pretend to let a little out, but to take care not to tell him the truth. I pretended to be astonished at what he said.

"Keep gold in your tent!—well, I don't think the bushrangers would find much in our tent if they visited it. I suppose you know my brothers, from your speaking about them?" I inquired, well knowing he did nothing of the kind.

"Well, now, I can't say as how I knows them exactly, but one of my mates does;—he took some stores from Melbourne for them last year," he answered.

This I knew to be false, for the station drays that took the wool down to Melbourne always returned loaded with our year's supply. However, I pretended to believe him; and seeing this, he proceeded to do a little more pumping.

"Now, from what you chaps are doing, do you reckon it would pay a cove better to take a claim near you than to work his bullock team?"

He said this very quietly, and, had it not been for his cram about his mate, I should not have thought he meant more than he said.

"I don't think you would earn much

near us; and, if you really intend trying MacIvor, I'd advise you to go over to the other side, and get as near to Porter's claim as you can."

I said this to see what he would say, for it was well known at the diggings that Porter was doing well, and that he had two of the police constantly living in his tent as a guard.

"I guess Porter's part of the diggings won't do for me," he said, hastily; and then, correcting himself, went on, "I mean I don't think there is another claim on that side worth having."

After a good deal more talk of the same sort, he went off—taking, however, exactly the direction away from that in which I told him I had seen the bullocks. If I had hesitated before, this convinced me; so, as soon as he was out of sight, I hurried back, and told my brothers all about it. They at once agreed there was something up, and took measures to guard against a sudden surprise. First of all, the gold was removed from its hiding-place in the tent, and a large hole was made half-way down the shaft of the claim, into which it was put, and carefully covered over. Every night a regular watch was kept, and all slept with their revolvers loaded and placed under their heads.

Next day my friend sauntered into our tent, where I was, in free and easy digger fashion.

"Well, matey," he said, "you see I aint long coming arter you. Me and my mates has got that there claim up there," pointing to an old deserted claim not many yards from ours, "as those duffers left; and I hopes as how we may share in with some of yourn luck."

"If you don't get better luck than we have had, you won't stay long," I replied. "But you are in luck, anyhow, for you have just come in time for dinner; so I'll just go and call our fellows up."

I went out, and as I was coming back I saw him, on his knees, examining the place where we had buried the gold. I took care to make plenty of noise, so as to let him know I was coming, and give him time to get out of his suspicious position, as I did not wish him to know I had seen him.

After he left, I told what I had seen. My brother Harry at once said I must go home, as he feared a row. This, however, I was equally anxious not to do; and begged so

hard to be allowed to remain, and my other brother, Jim, backed me up so well, that at last I was told I might stay if I promised that, in the event of anything taking place, I would keep quiet and not expose myself. I think the real reason I was not sent home was for fear I should talk about it there, and so frighten my mothers and sisters that my brothers would have to go home also. I was told to keep my eyes open, and if I saw anything unusual going on to let them know at once.

For some days nothing unusual took place. Our new neighbours seemed to be just the common sort of digger—working hard all the week, and shooting, drinking, &c., on Sundays.

I used to wonder that accidents were not more frequent on Sundays than they were. The usual amusement on Sunday afternoons was for every man who had a revolver—and few were without one—to shoot at a mark, which I must say was seldom hit, so that the balls went whistling over it. This, on a crowded diggings, was very dangerous, one would think; yet I never heard of any one being shot. Then, when it was too dark for the continuation of this ball practice, the diggers assembled in some drinking-shop, where brandy, gin, or any other sort of spirit—diggers are not particular—was consumed in enormous quantities, and fights became the order of the day, or rather night. These fights, in a crowded tent or shed, dimly lighted, and rendered still darker by dense clouds of tobacco smoke, usually ended in a general free fight, each man hitting any one he could, friend or foe—there was no distinction of any sort made. After this, the drunken men reeled home; and seeing that the holes were all left open, unprotected by any sort of fence, no roads, and no lights, the only wonder is that any of them ever reached their tents. It was perfectly astonishing how few accidents occurred. Of course, now and then a man would be found lying dead at the bottom of a shaft by the owners of a claim, when they went to work in the morning; but even this was rare. I think what saved them was, that most of them were too drunk to walk at all.

Our neighbours did not go in for the grog-shop business; but used instead to have a good drunk in their own tent alone. I was going to say a quiet drunk; but that would be overstepping the bounds of truth, for a noisier lot there was not on the diggings;

and we got very little sleep on a Sunday night after they came near us. We used sometimes to hope that, like the Kilkenny cats of proverbial notoriety, they might on some more than usually festive occasion kill each other. In this, however, we were disappointed; and they always seemed better and faster friends than ever after a night devoted to fighting and quarrelling than another.

Their party, like ours, consisted of four—one, the man I have already mentioned, who was not much different from the usual style of digger; of the other three, two were rough, common-looking fellows, and evidently "old lags"—or convicts, Bill—and looked blackguards enough for anything in the way of crime. We saw little or nothing of them, as they seemed shy of showing their handsome faces; and with good reason, as we afterwards found out.

The other was a young and very fine-looking fellow of about six and twenty, six feet high, good measure, broad-chested, wiry, and active, bright dark eyes, nearly black hair, no beard, but fine silky moustachios. It was a curious thing his shaving, as I believe he was the only man on the diggings who did so. Had he any reason for doing so? we often asked one another. He was a very pleasant fellow, and had seen a good deal of the world for so young a man, was well educated, and evidently a gentleman, from his manners and conversation. The only bad feature in his face was his mouth, which, although well-formed enough, had a cruel, hard expression at times. He never got drunk like his mates; but he could and did take his grog quite as freely as they did. Unlike them, however, he got calmer and more cautious when a bit screwed—drunk I don't think he ever was. Often, of an evening, he used to come and sit with us, and tell us yarns of California, wild tales of American Indians, whaling expeditions, and sometimes little incidents of his college life; making himself so pleasant, that in spite of our suspicions, I believe we were always glad to see his good-looking, merry face in our tent.

He called himself Philip Clifford, but there was not much chance of that being his right name. Many gentlemen, as well as roughs, changed their names when they went digging.

The others' names I have forgotten, excepting that they were called Angus (my friend), Sam, and Jack.

It must have been about ten days after they came near us, that one morning a man was found lying dead—stabbed through the back—and robbed. No clue could be found to the murderer; but it made us more than ever watchful and vigilant.

Two nights after this happened, Clifford came to our tent, and sat late, making himself more than usually pleasant. He seemed in high spirits, singing songs, and telling stories without end. He really was a very pleasant fellow—what is called "good company," you know.

Just before going away, he told us his party had found gold; and, judging from the appearance, there was plenty of it. I remember him saying—

"I think, my boys, we are on the same vein you are fast to; only as we are higher up, I guess we will have the pull of you yet."

We all wished him good luck, and away he went to his tent, singing all the way.

We felt more easy about our neighbours that night than we had done for a long time; and began to think we were wrong, and that they were genuine diggers after all, and that Angus had only pumped me to find out if it was worth their while to settle near us on the chance of sharing our luck. So strong was this opinion, that Jim proposed giving up watching at night; but to this the others would not agree, and well for them it was they did not.

We had been asleep for an hour or two, when I was awakened by Harry, whose watch it was, quietly calling the others up.

"What's the row?" muttered Jim, half asleep.

"Be still," replied Harry, in a whisper. "I saw a light in Clifford's tent, but only for an instant, so perhaps it is all right. However, it is better for us to be on the look-out in case of anything going to— Hush!" he said, still lower; "I hear feet outside the tent. Don't one of you move, but just get your revolvers ready. I'll fire at the first sign I see of any one coming into the hut, and if I miss, then we will each have a turn; but it is no use all firing at the same time."

I could now hear stealthy footsteps close by my head, and, though not frightened, I was very excited, and *heard* my heart beating loudly and fast. All remained quiet for some little time; but presently I heard again the footsteps, and then the breathing of a man within a few feet of me. I felt strongly inclined to speak, and tell Harry, and must, I

am sure, have done so, but at that moment I saw Harry slowly raise himself on one elbow, and point his revolver at the side of the tent where I was lying. I felt I was safe, for Harry was a certain shot, and as soon as any one tried to get in would fire; so I lay perfectly still. Presently I heard a grating sound, and guessed at once that whoever was outside was cutting the ropes of the tent, so as to let it down on the top of us, and so render us helpless. This, however, I knew they could not do; for we had put up a sort of frame inside to strengthen and keep it stiff, and this, being covered inside again with canvas, could not be seen from the interior of the tent. The only ways by which any one could get into the tent were by the door or by cutting holes in the canvas. I thought once I saw a face peering in at the half-closed slit which formed the door, but if so it was gone again in an instant. From the little noise I heard, I was certain now that some one was trying to slit open the canvas; but doing it very cautiously, and using a very sharp knife. Suddenly, the tent was lighted up by the flash of a pistol, followed by the sharp report, and then two more shots were fired. The flashes showed me, in a confused sort of manner, four men rushing out of the tent; but whether my brothers and their mates or not, I could not be certain. Then a few more shots, shouts, and the sounds of a regular hand to hand fight going on just outside. I was not long in cutting a hole in the tent large enough to let me creep out. It was not very dark, and I could see men struggling with each other close by, and now and then heard my brothers' voices. My first thought was to go for the police, and I had actually started to do so; but I remembered that long before I could get to the camp the affair would be settled one way or the other. Coming back, I had to pass near our shaft; and as I got close I saw the figure of a man standing at the mouth of the hole, and working the windlass we had for getting the stuff out with. The truth at once flashed on me that he was either lowering or raising his mate, and no doubt knew where our gold was hidden. No time was to be lost. Back I went to the tent—where the fight still went on with undiminished ardour—as fast as I could for my gun, one barrel of which was loaded with ball. No one noticed me, and I got it and returned as close to the shaft's mouth as I dared. There was the man, now

standing still, and no doubt listening to the row which was going on close to him. I got to within about fifteen or twenty yards, and then, taking a good deliberate aim, fired. He gave a sudden start, and turning round, caught sight of me. Uttering a loud oath, he was springing towards me, when his foot catching on something or other—most likely the rope or the frame of the windlass—he tripped and fell head first down the shaft, giving a shriek I won't forget in a hurry. To run up and cut the rope was the work of a moment. I heard a crash, a loud cry, and then fainter but piteous cries for help from the bottom of the hole; but, as you may imagine, I did not stay to listen to them.

By this time the diggings round about us were alarmed, and lights were seen in all directions, and men were running to our aid from all quarters.

When I got to the tent I found my brother Jim trying to tie up his arm, from which the blood was freely streaming. I bound it up, as best I could, with my shirt torn into strips; and, whilst doing so, got the particulars of the fight—as much, at least, as he knew.

It seems that as soon as Harry saw a man's head at the door of the tent he fired, and then two of the others did the same. They all four then rushed out, and saw four men, who, on seeing them, turned to run for it. They fired again at them, which had the effect of making them turn and face them. They closed, and Jim could tell me little more than that the fellow he grappled with stabbed him in the arm, and that, after struggling with him for a long time, he got hold of his knife, and, wrenching it from him, gave him a dig with it somewhere or other, which had the effect of making him let go his hold. Whether he was killed or not, Jim did not wait to inquire; for, finding himself free, he came back to the tent and tried to stop the bleeding from his arm, as I found him. Jim did not know what had become of the others, and was too weak from loss of blood to say much. By this time there were plenty of diggers round us, and we soon got Jim made all right, and as comfortable as the circumstances allowed.

In a short time, Harry and the other two came back. They knew very little of what had happened, except that each had grappled a man whose face was blackened,

who, when the noise of the diggers coming to help us was heard, had broken away from them; and although they followed them some distance, they could not gain on them. Harry said he was certain, from his voice, that his antagonist was Clifford; whereupon some of the diggers ran over to his tent, and there, sure enough, they found it quite deserted.

I then told them my part of the night's work; and it was decided that a night at the bottom of the hole would do the fellow or fellows, if the one I fired at was alive after his fall, no harm. No one seemed to like the idea of being lowered down to meet a desperate man, who no doubt was armed, at the bottom of a deep shaft—in the dark, too. So two or three agreed to watch the hole for the remainder of the night instead, in case of a rescue being attempted.

I got great praise for what I had done; but I do not think I deserved it, as any one else would have done exactly the same. However, as I was the indirect means of saving the gold, no doubt every one thought more of what I had done than they would otherwise.

Next morning the police came, and induced one of the fellows in the hole to come up—the other was too much injured to move. He proved to be Angus. The other—the injured one—was a stranger to us. Angus confessed that he had, by listening at nights to our conversation, learnt where our gold was hidden; and that the attack on the tent was only made to attract our attention, and prevent our knowing that he was taking the gold out of its resting place. He said that Clifford had taken a fancy to us, and had insisted that none of us should be hurt; vowing, if one of us were killed, he would shoot whoever did so himself. This accounted for their not firing in return, and for their closing and wrestling with us instead. All they wanted was to give Angus time to clear off with the gold. I expect the way Jim came to be stabbed was that the fellow he collared was the one who had cut the ropes of the tent, and who still had the knife in his hand.

None of the others were caught. Angus got seven years. The other fellow got over his hurts, much to every one's surprise, and went to keep Angus company. It was found I had missed him when I fired, owing, no doubt, to my nervousness; and, to tell

you the truth, I was rather annoyed when I was told so.

What was so nearly being such a loss to us, turned out a great gain in the end.

About two days after this affair, I was hunting for some stray cattle in the valley where the hut stood, near which I first met Angus, when a man suddenly rode out of the scrub, and called me by name. I recognized Clifford, and, I must say, felt in a pretty considerable stew. However, he came up to me, and after asking about Angus and the other man, he gave me a long explanation of, and almost, it seemed to me, an apology for, his conduct. He said he was the head of a gang of bushrangers, and had planned the robbery of my brothers' party; but that after having seen them he had taken a great fancy for Harry, and wished his mates to give up the job. To this, however, they would not agree; and urged on by Angus, who was the most determined of the lot, told him that he might give it up if he liked, but that they would not, Angus adding that he "meant to have all the swag, even if he shot every one of the vile lot." Seeing that it was no use trying to persuade them to give it up, he agreed to join them, in the hope of preventing Angus from carrying out his threat. He, however, stipulated that not one of the party was to be injured; and swore he would shoot with his own hand the first who disobeyed him in this respect. He then told me that the claim he had been working was really a good one, and advised me to go at once to MacIvor, and tell Harry to work it. I did so, and it turned out first-rate. I got a share of it, which gave me such a good start that I was able, some years ago, to buy the station I now have; and this is the reason I changed its name to Clifford Station.

"I suppose you never heard more of Clifford, did you?" I asked.

"Yes, I did. I met him about two years afterwards in an hotel in Bendigo, and passed a very pleasant evening with him," said Charlie. "He seemed quite pleased when I told him of our luck; and he told me the story of his life, too, which certainly was a queer one."

"Suppose you retail it to us some night," said Bill. "I never heard a real bushranger's story, and would like to do so very much."

"But I wonder you did not hand him over to the police," added Walker, "when you had him so snug."

"What good would that have done me?" replied Stevens. "He had done me no harm—in fact, had done me a great deal of good; and, besides, I liked the fellow, and so would you if you had known him. As to telling you his story, I may do so when it comes to my turn to spin a yarn again."

LITTLE JOHNNY.

THERE was a crowd. It was not the removal of an organ-man, whose interminable grind had driven some old lady into hysterics in the large house where the blinds were drawn. There was no servant at the door protesting that mistress paid the man twice to move away; but, to levy another sixpence, he merely paused to twist the screw in the corner of his organ and commence his set of tunes afresh. Near the gin-palace, it was more likely a row—inebriates deciding their dispute outside.

No, it was not a row. The laughter would be louder if it were a gutter preacher with improvised platform of an inverted rum-cask, and a pocketful of greasy teetotal tracts; and, surely, the club-footed vendor of bunion plaisters and razor strops was no curiosity.

"Make way there! Here's the stretcher coming!" shouted a clamorous orange woman.

"Stand back, will yer, and give the man air?" bellowed a tyke with a donkey cart.

"Well, it's little air a dead man wants!" sneered the woman.

"Who told you he was dead?" returned the man. "Did you not see his mouth moving a minute ago?"

"Moving! No more moving than the Monument there below; for I never took my eyes out of him this half-hour."

"Well, for all the good they're to you, you might leave them in him; but if I was you, I'd have them on my oranges."

Dropping the brick she had brought forward as a pillow, and examining her basket, the woman exclaimed that but three mouldy ones were left; whereupon several dirty-faced urchins in her vicinage evinced a slight impatience to retire, and directly slunk away.

"Leave him alone—he's coming to," said a shrewd-looking cobbler, dashing cold water from a jug—which incident suggested a variety of observations from the bystanders as to the cobbler's lasting charity and love

for saving soles; when general attention was directed to something from which proceeded a moan.

It was a prostrate man, whose haggard and distorted face bespoke more the ravages of poverty and vice than years—a page deeply seared with the brand of misery and despair, which, in the writhing and groaning of his returning life showed, with dreadful clearness, the depths to which degraded humanity may sink.

The rent and dingy tights, and faded spangles, declared him an itinerant acrobat; and a wretched-looking boy, dressed after the same fashion, in head-band and darned hose, had gathered up a piece of worn carpet, and was crying beside an old drum.

Evening closing in gloomily, the group had dwindled to a few; and now, at length, two policemen approached, and after having placed a canvas machine on the ground, they proceeded to raise into it the half-conscious and resisting vagrant.

"I say, my young thimbliger," said the taller constable, briskly, "has this here old boy got anything to do with you?"

"He has got to be my father, that's all," was the reply.

"And that's quite enough, I should think."

"Then, if you're his kid," said the other, "you can tell us if he's in a fit, or what; for I'm blowed if I know whether it's a case of obstruction, drunk and disorderly, or loitering with malicious intent. It don't matter which, you know; so stop wriggling, old chap. Quiet, will you? Hold down his other hand there."

The efforts of both policemen were now exerted in tying the man down, while the little fellow piteously implored—

"Oh, mister, loosen the strap across his throat—do, for mercy's sake! Father, be quiet, for me. Don't you know little Johnny? Oh, sir, he's choking—I know he is!"

"You'd best pack your traps and come along—you'll both be lodged to-night."

"We'll go anywhere, sir; but don't tie him so tight. He's getting black in the face! Oh, is there no one to save him—no one at all, at all?"

The poor boy burst into a heart-piercing wail as his unhappy parent and himself were hurried onwards to the station-house.

Some days had passed, the man had grown worse, and malignant symptoms had developed themselves. The prison physician had him removed to the gaol infirmary, where

the last scene in the drama of his life was rapidly closing. His keeper, with a cunning begot of experience, interpreting some incoherent words uttered in a lucid moment, elicited from him something so grave that a magistrate was sent for to receive the dying man's statement.

The hoarse tongue of the prison bell tolled eight, and a faint gleam of morning pierced the gloom of the sick ward. Through the night, in his delirium, he fought, drank, laughed, yelled, in anger and glee; now climbing walls to elude pursuers, now tumbling in the streets with little Johnny. Exhaustion succeeding, he had just been awakened from that portentous coma wherein the clammy forehead, sunken eye, and laboured breath herald approaching dissolution.

"He is better now, Mr. Flood," said the keeper to a gentleman who had just entered with the governor of the prison.

"How do you feel, my poor man?" inquired this visitor.

"You must speak louder, sir, or he won't hear you," urged the attendant.

The magistrate repeated the question, to which the response was a deep-drawn sigh.

Accustomed as the worthy man had been to tales of horror, he seemed to recoil from the startling disclosures his interrogatories called forth. At length, bending low over the couch, he scanned the features before him, and asked, with an anxious, timid expression, the name by which the man was known before he had joined a party of strolling players.

The man did not remember any other than Tumbling Tim, that by which he was then known.

"Had he any friends?"

"No—he never had a friend."

"No relatives?"

"None, except his wife and little Johnny. He did not know where they were; but if he got out, he'd soon find them."

After a pause, he murmured, while a ray of returning memory flitted across his pallid face, that he had a brother once—long ago; but that he had never met since childhood. He remembered they wandered about, when very small, selling cigar lights. They used to seek shelter on doorsteps at night, and in summer under the trees. One wet day, while they stood dripping under a cart-shed—he remembered it well, for he never got better of his rheumatics—a gentleman came up, took his brother Charlie, and caged him

in an industrial school. He *escaped* himself by biting the gentleman's legs. He should like to see old Charlie; but he knew, twenty years ago, he could not live long in an industrial school.

The magistrate had turned aside; and, shading his face at the iron-grated window, appeared overcome with emotion; while the man, plunging into a wild strain, wandered on unchecked.

"He is getting the jigs again!" said the attendant, as a sepulchral laugh came from the pallet, followed by a faint call on the audience to stand aside, and witness the double somersault.

Their efforts to abate the violence of the paroxysm were vain; and after an interval of agony—an agony spared to neither tribune nor tumbler—the magistrate turned and saw before him, with feelings easy to be conceived, the corpse of his own brother.

Outside the gaol gate had been standing all the morning a squalid woman and a boy, both in the last stage of destitution. They had fruitlessly implored to be admitted; and having been threatened that further craving would entail their removal, they were waiting for any passing official to notice them, and obtain an entrance for them.

During that weary waiting, but three individuals stayed to observe them: the first, a warder, ordered them off the steps, and, to secure their immediate compliance, came forward and gave them a push; the second, a clergyman, approached with a countenance of beaming benignity, and, protected by his umbrella, gave them a brief exhortation; the third, a labourer, attracted by the coughing of the woman and famished look of the child, gave them all his greasy pocket contained—two coppers and a crust.

The noise of a lock was heard; the rusty hinge creaked; and, on a gentleman walking forth, the iron-plated wicket of the gaol gate closed with a resounding bang.

"Oh, sir," said the woman, curtsying till her rags, already soaked with the wet, trailed in the mud—"Oh, sir, for Heaven's love, get me in to see my husband!"

Mr. Flood—for it was, he—walked on abstractedly.

"I was told here last night he was better; but yesterday I heard he was dying. And I know," she continued, "he must be dead, or I would have been allowed to see him before this."

"Your husband, did you say?" inquired the magistrate, stopping and glancing from the woman to the boy. "Who is your husband?"

"A man out of work, sir," replied the woman, hesitatingly.

"Has he ever been in prison before?"

"Never, your honour, in these parts," answered the poor woman, evasively.

"What is your husband's name?"

"Tim, sir."

"Tim what?"

"Tim Flood, your honour; but ever since the show, he always went by the name of 'Tumbling Tim.'"

The party had now returned to the prison gate, which opened in answer to a knock.

"Now," said the magistrate, after having delivered in an undertone certain directions to a warder—"now, my poor woman, I fear you are not prepared for what awaits you; although, from what you have just told me, it cannot be altogether unexpected by you."

"Oh," said she, bursting into tears—"I knew it—I knew it; and surely they might have let me speak one last word to him!"

Mr. Flood sighed; and even the warders showed a faint glimpse of feeling.

"I would not wound you," he resumed, "by saying a harsh word of the deceased; and I can understand how death awakens grief for even so bad a husband and father as he has been. It is, however, a relief that he has passed beyond the reach of laws against which he had sinned so grievously."

Little Johnny sobbed aloud, and the mother wrung her hands, as the magistrate concluded—

"In your presence, I desire to have it known that this vagrant tumbler was my own brother. Commencing life together on the streets, I owe my position to-day to an advantage which had he had the fortune to enjoy, his fate would have been different; or had it been denied me, my life and its end might have been as his. This blessing, my little Johnny, shall be extended to you. It is the dual benefit to society and to yourself of being trained in an Industrial School."

SOME FRIENDS OF MINE.—I.

THE REV. MR. WADHAM AND MRS. WADHAM.

THE Rev. Mr. Wadham often went in the parish with the title of "poor Mr. Wadham," not because he was in need of

£ s. d.—for he had a good amount of that important article—but because there was something soft and simple in his character which made people pity him. If he had not been so good he would have been despised, and this prefix of "poor" to his name was a sort of well-deserved contempt.

Perhaps it was because he was so very thin, and wore knee breeches, that the people called him "poor Mr. Wadham," but the other reason is more likely to be the true one.

He would, probably, not have liked to have heard himself called poor, though pride was far from his nature; for it falls on the ear as something rather different to pity. I think he would not have minded being pitied.

There was, however, some sort of pride in him. He was proud of belonging to the Evangelical party in the Church, and of being spoken of as a pillar thereof. He read the reports of the Church Missionary Society with as much reverence as if they were divinely inspired, and regarded the collecting box on the chimneypiece as something very sacred. It was as interesting to him as the coffin of Mohammed is to a Mohammedan. Perhaps, when it gets so old and worn as to be unfit for active service, he will bury it in consecrated ground.

The contents of the box were counted about Easter time, and the fourpenny and threepenny pieces in it were very numerous; for it was by small coin that Mr. Wadham realized the value of money. He never paid his bills by cheque, which would not have given him the consciousness that he was paying anything at all; but he handed the money over, fingering each shilling with a brisk look, as some men have when they put their thumb and finger into a friend's snuff-box.

He did not regret having to pay, but he liked to feel that he was paying. It was a stimulant to him, like chewing tobacco is to some old men in the poorhouse; and it must be admitted that it was a more cleanly and wholesome one.

This missionary money in the mantelpiece box was chiefly the result of fines which he imposed on himself whenever he did anything which he ought not to have done, or when he left undone what he ought to have done.

He was extreme to mark what he did amiss, counting up his errors as Roman

Catholics do their beads; but he would have been horrified to have been told that there was a similarity between the two movements. It is form, not spirit, which separates religionists. A man like Mr. Wadham shrinks with aversion from the sight of a dogma which at its bottom holds the same meaning as his own. He connects it with something as horrible as Robinson Crusoe did the print of the savage's foot on the desolate island; but his fears are as mad as those of a runaway horse.

Mr. Wadham fined himself a threepenny-bit when he came down late to breakfast, and another when wandering thoughts came to him at family prayers; and he fined himself a whole handful of them when he had at all given way to evil temper. If the box was not full at the end of the missionary year, he fined himself another handful, groaning within, and sighing with a sigh that came up from his breast like a funeral procession at the remembrance of the radical deceitfulness of his own heart and the hearts of others.

When the annual missionary meeting came round, he emptied the box into the pocket handkerchief of the itinerant deputation, with an air as if he were giving him clusters of ripe grapes from the Promised Land. It was the "awful mirth" of the 100th Psalm that was upon his face.

Mr. Wadham was a widower, and, wet or fine, carried an umbrella, which some people jokingly called his second wife. He used it as a walking stick, putting it before his legs and drawing himself towards it, in much the same sort of fashion as a fish uses its fin. It was a large green umbrella, with brass fittings, about the size of Jonah's gourd. Mr. Wadham's attitude at a prayer meeting gave one the idea of a chamois leaping upward from rock to rock; and the image was not an untrue one, for he did at times feel as if he were climbing heights, when he prayed—in strict privacy—that his wife's temper might become more subdued, and that the heathen might be converted wholesale.

The holy estate of matrimony had not certainly been a Garden of Eden to him; but Mr. Wadham spoke of it as poetry speaks of things—as they ought to be, and not as they are. He never had complained of the kind of Eve which had been allotted to him; and now, when he speaks of her, he puts his hand over his brows as people do

when they look at an eclipse of the sun. She floated in his mind as a kind of misty pyramid of Egypt, or a phantom ship; and he preferred to think of her, now she was dead, more as a saint in glory than as one specially sent to support him. It was curious to hear this good man, to whom marriage had been an "abomination of desolation," praising and recommending the estate to others, as a kind of Abraham's bosom for the trials of life. Mrs. Wadham was a lady by birth, but her manners were strongly developed. She let people in society know she was there, and she ascended the staircase in the vicarage in a manner that made both the banisters and the stairs creak. She had frightened two curates so, that they left the place suddenly, without asking for a *bene decessit*; and one of them, who fled to Australia, is now driving a wherry there.

She liked religion and all other things to be well seasoned, and preferred soup that was reddened by cayenne, and red cabbage that bristled with peppercorns.

THE SHAM-SAMPLE SWINDLE.

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

SIR—"C. F." writes at me in the *Athenæum*: says she is a woman, and I have attacked her. Not exactly. It was she who attacked me: played off the sham-sample swindle—to which, by the bye, she still clings—by asserting that a solitary and exceptional passage was the rule of my story; and had the vulgarity to tell the public I was paid by the word, and so had done an unfair thing to my publishers.

Now, if to all this she had added that she was a woman, I should only have said, "You had better in future consult with some man, worthy of the name, before you write about authors and gentlemen."

I now withdraw every opprobrious epithet I heaped in error on this soft, gentle, modest, kindly, womanly creature. And she will understand my letter thus. If a man had written her first letter, he would have been a snob, and a scurrilous skunk. If a man had written her second letter, after reading mine, he would be an incurable liar, and shuffler. But as it is only a woman who has written both—why, it is only a woman.

I observe the sub-editor of the *Athenæum* writes *at* me in his weekly, though he suppressed the letter he comments on.

He played the same game when I defended Mr. Tom Taylor against unfair detractions in his columns.

Is this person a woman too? To cut all this shuffling short, Sir Charles Dilke displaced Mr. Hepworth Dixon as the editor of the *Athenæum*, in order to control it himself. This is notorious. It is equally so that he does exercise a certain control at this time. He is also the proprietor and vendor: he is the person responsible to the law, and is therefore fairly open to such a letter as mine, which treated him with courtesy, and appealed to his better feelings—and, I think, not in vain. Time will show.—Yours truly,

Feb. 1.

CHARLES READE.

TABLE TALK.

LITERALLY table talk: a word or two about tables, and about tables that talk or rap out answers, which amounts to much the same thing. I hardly know whether the inquiry into the pretensions of spiritualism in the columns of the *Times* has done good or mischief. Certainly, it has settled nothing that was unsettled before the discussion began; possibly it has given a stimulus to the trade of the mediums. One can hardly shut one's eyes to the existence of people who believe they can communicate with another world without leaving this. The literature of spiritualism, and the fact that in one week last month there were eight séances or meetings of inquirers and converts in London, and thirty-three in the provinces, are evidences sufficient of the vitality of the thing. To this may be added the fact that in one of the organs of the party (if we may call them so) no less than sixteen professional mediums — trance, clairvoyants, normal, prophetic, test, healing, and the rest—advertise their addresses and charges for advice, consultation, and assistance. We cannot deny that, in the face of all this, there are persons interested in spiritualism, or professional mediums who gain money from the people so interested. We concur with the *Times* in thinking its readers will probably agree that it is high time competent hands undertook the unravelling of this Gordian knot, for the consequences of an interest in the spirits are not always pleasant. "Lord Lytton (the late) tells us, and we can readily believe him, of devotees to spiritualism duped into disgrace and ruin through acting on a belief that they

are hearing predictions and receiving counsels from beings wiser than themselves; and Dr. Edmunds quotes several cases of lunacy and paralysis occurring in his experience, within a few months, in persons in the habit of attending dark séances." It is to be regretted that the *Times* reporters were neither converted by what they witnessed in their investigation of the claims of spiritualism, nor were they able to expose any imposture that had been practised on them. On the contrary, a report of investigations containing every species of manifestation from the spirit world, received "attestation of fifty respectable witnesses, which is placed before the title-page. Among them are a dowager duchess and other ladies of rank, a captain in the Guards, a nobleman, a baronet, a member of Parliament, several officers of our scientific and other corps, a barrister, a merchant, and a doctor. Upper and upper middle-class society is represented in all its grades, and by persons who, to judge by the positions they hold and the callings they follow, ought to be possessed of intelligence and ability."

IT WILL BE of interest to discover from the instructions given by the initiated how one is to deal with the spirits in order to draw from them their information and secure their assistance.

MENTAL CONDITIONS.—All forms of mental excitement are detrimental to success. Those with strong and opposite opinions should not sit together: opinionated, dogmatic, and positive people are better out of the circle and room. Parties between whom there are feelings of envy, hate, contempt, or other inharmonious sentiment, should not sit at the same circle. The vicious and crude should be excluded from all such experiments. The minds of the sitters should be in a passive rather than an active state, possessed by the love of truth and of mankind. One harmonious and fully developed individual is invaluable in the formation of a circle. The circle should consist of from three to ten persons of both sexes, and sit round an oval, oblong, or square table. Cane-bottomed chairs, or those with wooden seats, are preferable to stuffed chairs. Mediums and sensitives should never sit on stuffed chairs, cushions, or sofas used by other persons, as the influences which accumulate in the cushions often affect the mediums unpleasantly. The active and quiet, the fair and dark, the ruddy and pale, male and female, should be seated alternately. If there is a medium present, he or she should occupy the end of the table with the back to the north. A mellow mediumistic person should be placed on each side of the medium, and those most positive should be at the opposite corners. No person should be placed behind the medium. A circle may represent a horseshoe magnet, with the medium placed between the poles.

Some of the suggestions are horribly uncomfortable—for instance, “the influences which accumulate in the cushions;” but to trifles like these frequenters of spirit circles no doubt become inured in time. Your “spirits,” when found, require very gentle treatment.

IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE that such a defence against the insidious attacks of a nameless scribbler as that contained in the letter of Mr. Charles Reade, published in our number of January 25th, should fail to draw forth letters from correspondents in various parts of the three kingdoms. It is out of our power to publish the remarks of these writers at length. Nor do we wish to do so. They have added little that is new to the discussion. But they are unanimous in espousing the cause of the man of genius, so wantonly vilified, and expressing their esteem for, and admiration of, his writings. One letter, however, coming from Ireland, from a Queen's Collegian at Cork, we will not hold our hand from inserting:—“Having read Mr. Charles Reade's able vindication of his literary fame, I hope you will kindly permit me to offer a remark on the subject. The manners and drawing-room life of the Irish aristocracy in the early part of the last century cannot be reliably ascertained from the history of Ireland, or from political pamphlets. The only writer of eminence who ventured to describe, with anything like minuteness, the style of living among the upper classes in this country at that period is Swift; and his description, certainly, though not elaborate, is lifelike and powerful. I do not hesitate to say that, had Mr. Reade neglected to make use of the passage in Swift's poem referred to, his portraiture of Irish upper-class society would be necessarily imperfect, as, in a tale like ‘The Wandering Heir,’ in which the manners of by-gone times are reproduced, authentic accounts must be referred to. Otherwise, would not the attempt to paint the state of society at a period when it was totally different from that of the present day—in the absence of good authorities—be a mere fancy picture, without a tittle of connection with reality? How, in the name of goodness, could any writer reproduce the spirit of the past in his works without some description by an experienced critic of the period to guide him? It is the shallowest pedantry, in my opinion, on the part of the Pseudonymuncle, to charge Mr. Reade with plagiarism for laudably

seeking and using the information he obtained from a work so well known, and so valuable for its picture of contemporary high life, that it may well be called a book of reference. Nor is this proceeding of Mr. Reade by any means without precedent. Sir Walter Scott freely acknowledges the benefit he derived from forgotten MSS. and ancient poems, as well as from more modern sources. Indeed, he is rather ostentatious in his prefaces as regards his authorities. He made use largely of various documents in writing ‘The Heart of Midlothian,’ the foundation of which, as is well known, is a famous Scotch trial. Then, again, in those historical novels depicting earlier periods, such as ‘Ivanhoe,’ ‘Kenilworth,’ &c., he has embodied a large amount of antiquarian description borrowed from various records. In ‘The Fair Maid of Perth,’ he has made use of Wintoun's old poem on the battle of the clans Quhale and Chattan; and he has ingeniously given part of the verses in the introduction. And surely we cannot call Scott a plagiarist for this? No more can we apply the term to Reade. I have no doubt the literary world, recognizing as it does the worth of one of the greatest—if not, indeed, the greatest—of living English novelists, will laugh to scorn the puny snarler who has attempted to injure a noble reputation. Charles Reade is admired in Ireland and America as much as he is in England. He has stamped himself indelibly on the age as a moral reformer by ‘It is Never Too Late to Mend,’ a deep student of human nature by ‘Hard Cash’ and ‘Put Yourself in His Place,’ and as an enchanting storyteller by his other novels.”

WE ARE NOT ABLE, on going to press with this issue, to announce the result of the official inquiry into the charges brought by Mr. Dent against the Custom House officers at the port of Liverpool, and published in our columns. But we may state that, since the publication of our last number, the Surveyor-General's private secretary has called upon Mr. Dent, and served upon him a formal summons to attend at the Custom House, Liverpool, at eleven a.m. on Wednesday, the 29th ult. The sum of £5 was handed to Mr. Dent, along with the summons, by way of conduct money.

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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XVII.



It is the morning of Lollie's wedding day. As the girl dresses in her little room, she is crying silently. For a great fear has fallen upon her, the fear that what she is going to do will not meet with that approval and praise which she at first anticipated. It had been growing in her brain; and when, only yesterday, she first gave it expression, it assumed a clear and definite form. She dressed quickly, trying to soothe her own excitement, drank a cup of tea, and slipped out at ten o'clock to meet her lover. No thought, you will remark, of her grandmother? On the whole, I hardly see how any could be expected. The girl did not belong to the old woman. She owed nothing to her, she had not a thought in common with her, she hardly ever spoke to her; and save that

they slept under one roof, they had nothing to do with each other. Certainly, the idea that the old woman might be made unhappy by conduct of hers never occurred to her. It was a lovely morning in June, one of those days when London puts on its brightest aspect, and looks—as it always would, were Heaven pleased to improve our climate—the Empress of cities. Through the crowded streets, down Oxford-street and Regent-street, without stopping to look at the gratuitous exhibitions in the shop windows, Lollie tripped along, with heightened colour and quick-beating pulse.

Going to be married—going to marry a gentleman! What would be Mr. Venn's surprise and delight when she went to him in the evening?

For once, Philip was first at their trysting-place in the park.

Going to be married. Going to plight her troth—for better for worse, too. A girl who, in the absolute innocence of her heart, gives herself to him for no love that she bears him; but only to please, as she thinks, another man. Going to be a bridegroom? He does not look it, as he paces up and down the gravel, driving down his heels, with a pale face and a troubled look. Surely a bridegroom should look in better spirits; and when he sees the girl approaching, his own betrothed, soon to be his bride, why do his knees tremble beneath him, so that he must fain sit down on a bench?

Then she holds out her hand, and he takes it undauntedly.

"Remember what I said, Philip," she began directly. "Unless you marry me to-day, I shall not marry you at all; and I shall tell Mr. Venn everything."

"Is that the only love-vow you have to give me?" asked the bridegroom.

"Oh, Philip, do not talk like that. Always of love, and love-vows! I tell you again, I do not understand it. What should I say, if not the truth?"

Philip sighed. There was yet time to save himself. The girl did not love him; but, then, he loved the girl. He had that passionate longing for this sweet, fair-haired maiden—so bright, so clever, so *new*—which, I think, can never come to a man more than once in his life. God has made us so that not more than one woman can be an angel to us. Her excepted—we know the sex. We grovel to her; we stand upright before the rest, conscious of the head and a half difference between the man and the woman. Lollie was Philip's angel. And—alas! the pity of it—there are so many men who cannot hold their one woman an angel for longer than the honeymoon; and must needs cry shame and folly to themselves for the sweet infatuation which alone makes life tolerable to us.

"Come, Laura," said Philip, "I have the licence in my pocket—a special licence. See here." He pulled out the document. "The Archbishop of Canterbury has given his consent, you see; so that is all right. I thought you would best like a private marriage."

"Oh, yes," cried Lollie—"much best."

"And as we shall have no wedding breakfast, no carriage, and nothing but our own two selves, I have arranged with a very excellent clergyman—a Scotch clergyman—to perform the ceremony for us which will make you my wife. Will that do for you?"

He had fallen, then, into the pit dugged for him.

"Surely, Philip," she said, "it shall all be as you think best for us; and then I shall tell Mr. Venn."

He had been out of the park into the Strand, and took a Hansom cab to Keppel-street.

Mr. MacIntyre was himself standing at the window in the ground-floor front, and came to open the door. Then he led them in, and shut the door carefully. That done, he stared hard at the bride.

"Come into the other room a moment," said Philip, in a hoarse voice. "I want to say a word."

The other room was Mr. MacIntyre's bed-room, opening from the first by folding-doors. Lollie, left alone, looked out of the window and waited. As she looked, a funeral procession came from an opposite house, and the dismal cortège drove down the street. Then, too, the sky was clouded over, and big drops of rain were falling.

Her heart sank within her. Truly, an omen of the worst. She turned from the window, and looked round the room. A curious fragrance, unknown to her, was lingering about the corners. It was due to toddy. A small fire was burning in the grate, though the morning was warm; and a kettle was singing on the hob. Two or three pipes lay on the mantelshelf; and a few books, chiefly of the Latin Grammar class, bought when Mr. MacIntyre meditated taking pupils, stood upon the shelves. The furniture was hard and uncomfortable. And her spirits fell lower and lower.

In the other room she heard voices. If she had heard what was said, she might even then have escaped. But she only heard the murmur.

Philip, when the door was shut, turned upon his companion, with lips and cheeks perfectly white, and seizing Mr. MacIntyre by the shoulders, shook the little man backwards and forwards as if he had been a reed.

"Villain!" he groaned—"black-hearted, calculating scoundrel."

"When you've done shaking your best friend," returned his tutor, "and calling bad names, perhaps you will listen for a few moments to the voice of reason."

"Go on, then."

Philip sat down on the edge of the bed.

"I can't do it, MacIntyre—I can't do it," he murmured. "It is the blackest villainy. Poor Laura! poor darling! Oh, what scoundrels we are! And I, who once was an honourable man!"

"Hoots, toots," said the philosopher.

But Philip was lying with his face in his hands, shaking with emotion.

MacIntyre contemplated his old pupil for a few moments with a puzzled expression. Then—for he felt unequal to the ordeal without support—he went to the cupboard, and very silently poured out just half a glass of raw spirit, which he swallowed hastily. Then he addressed himself to business, and tried, but with small effect, to assume a sympathetic air.

"Ma puir laddie," he said. "You surely never thought that I, Alexander MacIntyre, the releeigious guide of your infancy, was going to counsel you to take a dishonourable step. Phil, ye'll be as legally tied up as if the Archbishop did it. Believe me—a regularly ordained minister of the Established Kirk o' Scotland. If a prince was going to

be married, this would be the right shop to come to. And you, with a licence, special and most expensive, and all."

Philip sat up again.

"Is it true, MacIntyre? Is it really true, what you say?"

"True, my Phil, every word true. Shall I swear to it? Now, brush your hair and look bright, and let us go back to the lassie. Hech! man—there's a thunder-clap. Come along, or she will be frightened."

He pushed him back, and, sitting down at the table, laid open a Bible, borrowed for the occasion from the unsuspecting landlady.

"Sit down, both of you," he began, impatiently.

They sat down opposite him.

"Have ye got a licence, Mr. Durnford?" he asked. "Good. A special licence, granting you permission to be married in any parish? Good. At anytime? Good. In any place of worship? Vera good. And by any clergyman? Verra goodindeed. Youngleddy, your name, if you please. You may write it here."

He had prepared two slips of paper to imitate a marriage certificate. And Philip noticed now, for the first time, that he was "dressed" for the character, in complete black, with a white neckcloth that would not have disgraced a banjo man, and which, with his red nose, gave him quite the appearance of a superior Mute. And, the signatures obtained, when he turned over the leaves of the Bible a cheerful piety became diffused over his face, quite new to his friends, and very remarkable to witness. Lollie looked at the clergyman who was marrying her with an instinctive feeling of aversion. The ill-fitting black clothes, the voluminous necktie, the red nose and pale cheeks, the shaking hand, all told her, as plain as words could speak, that the man was one of the great Stiggins tribe of whom Hartley Venn had told her. Nevertheless, she was in Philip's hands; and, like the birds on the solitary's island, she had not yet learned to distrust mankind, because she only knew one man.

It does not befitt this page to describe with greater detail the mockery of marriage which Mr. MacIntyre solemnly went through. Suffice it to say that, after reading a chapter of the Bible, he prayed. And after his prayer, making the two stand up, he joined their hands, pronounced them man and wife,

and concluded by an exhortation mainly made up of what he still recollected of the shorter Catechism. What it wanted in unction it gained in doctrine; and though there was little in the discourse calculated to assist the bride in her duties of married life, there was plenty which might have been used as a rod and staff by the Calvinistic Christian. Lollie stood frightened and bewildered. For all through the "service," the thunder had been rolling and crashing, and the lightning seemed to play over the very house where this great wickedness was being committed. Even Mr. MacIntyre was moved by it. It was one of those great thunderstorms which sometimes break over London, striking terror to all hearts, such as those which fell upon us last year—I mean the year of grace 1872—a fierce, roaring, angry thunderstorm. And as the lightning flashed across his eyes, and the thunder pealed in his ears, the minister fairly stopped in his discourse, and murmuring, "Hech! sirs. This is awfu'!" waited for the anger of the elements to subside.

But he ended at last, and, congratulating the bride, offered Philip one of the slips of paper, keeping the other for himself. Then he rubbed his hands and laughed—a joyless cackle. And then he produced a black bottle and a small cake, and poured out three glasses of wine. He drank off his own at a gulp, refilled it, and sat down, rubbing his hands again.

This was Lollie's wedding breakfast.

Outside, the hail pattered against the windows, the thunder rolled, and the warm spring air seemed chilled again to winter.

Philip said nothing. A look was in his face such as neither MacIntyre nor Lollie had ever seen before—a sort of wild, terrified look; such a look as might be imagined in the face of a man who, after long planning, has at last committed a great and terrible crime; such a look as one would have if he heard the voice of God accusing him—the voice Philip heard in the storm. Men are so. That unlucky Jew whom the thunderstorm sternly rebuked for eating pork was not the first, nor will he be the last, to connect natural phenomena with his own misdoings. In the storm outside, Philip, with the superstition of a Creole, heard the anger of Heaven. It only echoed the remorse in his own heart. A second time he seized MacIntyre by the arm, and led him to the bed-room.

"Once again," he said, "*I must* speak to you. Tell me whether it is true—is it true—are we married? Speak the truth, or I will kill you!"

"You are married, Phil," returned the other. "No question can ever arise on the legality of the marriage until—until—"

"Until when?"

"Until you come into your property. And now, listen. There is, *perhaps*—I only say perhaps—a little irregularity. If you want to remove that, remember to take your wife into Scotland, whenever you please, and live with her as your wife, openly. Then you need fear nothing. I say this to make you quite certain; but I do not believe there can be any legal doubt."

Philip looked at him with a surprised air. Then, with great relief, he walked into the other room, where Lollie was standing waiting and puzzled.

"Laura, my darling," he cried, kissing her passionately. "My wife, my bride! we are married at last. If ever I desert you, may God desert me!"

She drew herself from his arms, not blushing, not coy, not ashamed; but only cold.

"We are really married?" she cried, clapping her hands. "I wasn't certain; and now we will go straight to Mr. Venn, and tell him."

The two men looked at each other.

"My child," said Philip, changing colour, "we must be married like everybody else, must we not?"

"But we are, Philip, are we not?"

"Yes, dear; but married people always go away for a journey together. You and I are going to France for a month. When we come back, we shall call at Mr. Venn's chambers."

She stamped her foot.

"I shall go to-day. You said I was to tell him to-day. I *will* tell him. Philip, if you do not go with me, I will go by myself."

"Make her write," whispered the man of experience.

"You certainly cannot go, Laura," said her husband. "That is impossible. But I tell you what you shall do. You shall write him a letter, telling him all. Mr. MacIntyre shall take it, and tell him the particulars. We have but a quarter of an hour to spare, for our train starts at once. Now, dear"—taking pen and paper—"sit down and write. It is best so—it is, indeed."

She burst into tears. She declared that

she had been deceived. She insisted on going at once to Gray's Inn. If Philip had not held her, she would have gone.

Mr. MacIntyre said nothing; only, when he caught Philip's eye, he pointed to the pens and paper. Meantime, it was a critical moment; and his nose, which he constantly rubbed, seemed bigger and redder than ever.

"Laura, you must not go to Mr. Venn to-day. It is absurd," pleaded Philip. "Sit down, now. Write; no one shall read what you say. And it shall be sent at once. But you cannot go to Gray's Inn."

Lollie sat down, and tried to write. But she burst into fresh tears, and was fain to bury her face in her hands.

"Women are so," whispered the Scotchman. "Obsaive. In ten minutes she will be laughing again."

In less than ten minutes she recovered, and tried to write. Philip waited patiently, watching her.

She began three or four sheets of note paper and tore them up. At last she wrote, hurriedly—

"DEAREST MR. VENN—My secret may now be told. I have done what you wished me so much to do. I have married a gentleman. I have married Mr. Philip Durnford; and I am always, and ever and ever, your own most grateful and most loving little girl—
"LOLLIE."

She folded it up, addressed it, and gave it to her husband.

"MacIntyre," said Philip, "take the note round, will you, this very day? Tell Mr. Venn that my wife and I are gone to France—probably to Normandy—for a month; that we shall call upon him directly we return; that my greatest wish is to make his friendship. Will that do for you, Laura?"

"Philip," she said, taking his hand—"now, you are really kind."

"That is my own Laura. But now we must make haste. I have got your boxes at the station."

"My boxes?"

"Yes. You did not think you were going to France with nothing but what you have on, did you?"

"I never thought about going to France at all."

"The tickets are taken. There will be nothing to do but to make ourselves happy. Now, MacIntyre, get me a cab, will you?"

It seemed strange that so reverend a gentleman should be ordered in this peremptory way to fetch a cab; but Lollie was too much surprised with everything to feel perplexed at this. The cab came.

"Now, my darling! MacIntyre, good-bye. Jump in, Laura."

"Don't forget my letter, Mr. MacIntyre," cried the girl. "Mind you take it to-day."

And so they drove off.

Mr. MacIntyre returned to his room.

"About this letter now," he said. "Let me read it."

By the help of the kettle he steamed the envelope, opened and read the poor little epistle.

He put it down and meditated.

"Suppose I take it round," he said. "Why should I? Poor bonny little lassie! Loves him more than her husband—that is clear. If I take it, difficulties, dangers, all sorts of things may happen. If I do not take it, this Mr. Venn will never forgive the girl. Well, which is it—my happiness or hers? A man or a woman? Myself or another?"

He meditated a long time. Cruelly selfish and wicked as the man was, he had been touched by the girl's beauty and innocence, and would willingly have spared himself this additional wickedness. But then there rose up before him the vision of a court of justice. He saw himself tried by a jury for mock marriage. He knew that the law had been broken. What he did not know was, how far the offence was criminal, or if it was criminal at all. Then a cold perspiration broke out upon him.

"Let us hide it," he said—"let us hide it. Perhaps we can devise some means of preventing this man Venn from knowing it—at all events, just yet."

And so saying, he pushed the letter into the fireplace, and watched it burning to ashes.

"And as for Master Phil," he murmured—"why, I'll give him just two months to cure him of this fancy, and bring him to the end of his money. Then, we shall see—we shall see. The great card has to be played."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I AM ill at ease to-night," said Hartley, on the Wednesday evening, when Jones and Lynn found him at the Rainbow. "I am low-spirited. Forebodings,

like the screech-owl's mew, oppress me. Laura was to have told me some grand piece of news to-day, and has not come. Then there was the thunder. I am afraid of thunder. Engineers ought to turn their attention to it. Bring me some bitter beer, George—unless the thunder has turned it sour.

"I like this place," he went on. "It is quiet. The mutton is good, the beer is good, and there is an ecclesiastical air about it. The head waiter resembles an elderly verger without his gown. The manager might pass for a canon; and as for the carver, I have never known any one beneath the dignity of a prebendary grow bald in that singular manner.

"Life, Jones," he continued, in the course of his dinner, "may be compared to a banquet. You have, perhaps, often anticipated this comparison."

"Not I," said Jones—"not I, myself. But Longfellow has.

'Life is but an endless banquet,
Where we still expectant sit;
Be not thou a cold wet blanket,
Damping all thy neighbour's wit.

Chops for one; and for another,
Turkey stuffed with truffles gay.
Only bread for me. My brother,
Turn the carver's eye this way.

Let us all be up and eating,
With a heart for any slice;
Beef grows cold, and life is fleeting;
Pass the champagne and the ice."

Venn repeated his first words, and resumed the topic.

"When it comes to my turn to be served, the noble host, addressing me with a countenance full of benevolence and friendship, says, 'Hartley, my dear boy, take another disappointment.' It would be bad manners, you know, to refuse. Besides, I am not quite certain how a refusal would be received. So I bow and smile: 'Thank you, my Lord. One more, if you please. A very little one, with gravy.'"

"Gravy! Is gravy the alleviator—?"

"Gravy, Jones, is the compensator. So I get helped again, and sigh when the plate comes back to me. In the distribution of good things, no one is consulted; but, by tacit agreement, we show our good breeding by pretending to have chosen. So, too, I believe, when convicts at Portland converse, it is considered manners to take no notice of each other's chains. I might prefer, perhaps, pudding and port, such as my neighbour gets. But I am resigned."

He sighed heavily, and went on eating his dinner with a tremendous appetite.

"Let us have," he said, when they had finished, "a Chorus right. Arthur Durnford is coming. Not a regular Chorus, but a Chorus of emergency. I hope it will not thunder any more."

"I have been making observations lately," he began, "on a class of women hitherto little studied. Speak up, Jones."

"Nay," said the dramatist, "I was but thinking of the old lines—I forget the author—about women—

' Virtue and vice the same bait have :

On either's hook the same enticements are—

Woman lures both the base and brave,

And beauty draws us with a single hair. "

"There is method in his madness," said Venn. "It is to be regretted only that Virtue does not always choose the bait with the same discrimination as Vice. This, however, is a wide subject. I was about to call the attention of the Chorus to the Woman who sniffs. About a week ago, having nothing to do, I got into a Favourite omnibus for an hour or two of quiet thought. The rattle of the omnibus glasses, when the wind is westerly, I find conducive to meditation; and as the Favourite line runs from Victoria to the extreme verge of civilization at Highgate, there is ample time. Several women got in, and I noticed—perhaps it was partly due to the time of year—several sniffs as each sat down and spread her petticoats. Your regular female omnibus passenger always takes up as much room as she can, and begins by staring defiantly round. I was at the far end, whither I had retired to avoid an accusation of assault; for they kick your shins across the narrow passage, and then give you in charge, these ladies. So delicate, my friends, is the virtue of the class to which I belong, that even the suspicion of an attack is resented with this celestial wrath. Presently, however, I being the only male, there came in a young person, quiet, modest, and retiring. She made her way to the far end, and sat down next to me. Instantly there was fired a volley—a hostile salute—from seven noses: a simultaneous sniff of profound meaning. Versed in this weapon of feminine warfare, and therefore understanding the nature of the attack, the new-comer blushed deeply, and dropped her veil. It was like the lowering of a flag. I took the

earliest opportunity of tendering her respectfully the compliments of the season; and, in spite of a second and even a fiercer attack, we held our own, and conversed all the way to Highgate. Coming back by the same omnibus, I insensibly glided into a vision."

"Good," said Jones, "let us have the vision."

"Methought I stood on an eminence and looked down, myself unseen, upon an island where men and women wandered about, of uncouth form and strange proportions. Some with venomous tongues, which lolled out in perpetual motion, yet saying nothing; some with trumpet-like noses; some with curiously deformed fingers; some with large and goggle eyes; and some with heads of enormous dimensions. This, my guide—I had an angel with me, of course—told me, was one of the lesser islands of Purgatory. It appears that Dante was quite wrong in his account of that place, which consists really of a group of contiguous islands, like the Bermudas. I dare say I shall see some more of them before I die. The one I was standing over was appropriated to sinners in small things—back-biters, envious, malicious, mean, grasping, selfish (these last had enormous stomachs, like barrels of port wine), and attributors of unworthy and base motives (who were gifted with a corresponding prominence behind). I requested permission to inspect the company more closely, and was taken down into their very midst. I was astonished to find that a very large majority of them were women: their dress and behaviour showed them to belong to our own middle class. They were all English; because, by reason of the great babble of conversation that goes on among this sort of criminals, it is found advisable to separate the nationalities.

"Looking more closely, I observed that the men chiefly carried the protuberances, fore and aft, of which I have spoken; while the women, nearly one and all, had the trumpet-shaped noses. The peculiarity of its shape was that the mouth of the trumpet was outward. Its musical effect could therefore only be produced by drawing the air towards the head, much in the same way as by a sniff. This struck me as a very singular arrangement. I was also informed that most of them, on their first arrival, had but very small trumpet noses; but that these, by dint

of practice, increased daily and gradually, until they arrived at the gigantic proportions which I saw around me. They began by being proud of this growth; but by degrees grew alarmed, and were seriously inconvenienced by its great size. They then began to reduce its dimensions, by allowing it to remain, so to speak, unexercised; and if, as sometimes happened, they arrived at a perception of its manifest ugliness, they discontinued its use altogether, when it totally vanished. Others had the great tongues of which I have spoken. They were too big to use for speech; but, as their owners were always wanting to communicate some fresh piece of malicious gossip, they were perpetually wagging and bobbing, though no articulate sound came forth. The possessors of the tongues were more melancholy of aspect than the trumpet-nosed sisters, because they were debarred from the use of their instruments altogether. The tongue followed the same laws as the nose, and there were even women provided with both tongue and nose. While I was contemplating these unhappy victims of vice, my attention was directed by my guide to a young lady of about twenty-five, whose nose had at its extremity the merest rudimentary mouthpiece—so small as to be almost a beauty spot—suggestive only of where a trumpet had formerly been. My guide accosted her, and requested her to give a history of herself. She smiled and complied.

“I was the daughter of a professional man, living in the neighbourhood of Russell-square. We were not rich, but we were well off. I was sent to a boarding-school at Brighton, where the principal things we were taught were to dress well, to aspire to a wealthy husband, to despise people of lower rank, to aim at getting as much amusement out of life as possible, to consider the admiration of men as the glory of a woman's life, and to regard the labour of men as performed only with one aim—to provide dress and a good establishment for their wives. This was the kind of education in our fashionable boarding-school; and when my sister and I came back to Russell-square, we were fully provided with all the weapons for that warfare which constitutes the life of most women. I found, wherever I went, nearly all girls the same as ourselves. We were good, inasmuch as we all went to church regularly, and would have done

nothing wrong. But we filled up our time with frivolity and gossiping. We were petty in our vices, and therefore, you see, our punishment is petty.’ She pointed to her nose, whereon the least tip of a kind of button marked the place where the mouthpiece had been only five minutes before. ‘The evil we did was not very great, and so our punishment is light. Even this is generally removed, if we repent.’

“Do you repent?” I asked.

“Oh, yes,” she said; ‘the lives of women, which might be so smooth, so happy, and full of love, are eaten into and poisoned by these habits of malice and envy. You men think us angels, and when you marry us and find out that we are full of faults, you begin to decry the whole sex. When will some one teach us that largeness of heart and nobleness that so many men have?’”

“A most sensible young woman,” Jones interrupted.

“At this moment the button at the end of her nose entirely disappeared, and she vanished.

“Where is she gone?” I asked my guide.

“There was that in his face which betokened temper. I fancy he must have been paid a per centage on the inhabitants of his island, or taken them on board by contract, according to number; for he refused to answer me, and was on the point of ordering me to move on, when I awoke.”

“The young woman, you say, is in the Bermudas,” said Jones. “I would she were in the arms of one who could rightly appreciate her.

‘Where the remote Bermudas ride,
A trumpet-nosed maid I espied;
And, as I looked her through and through,
Her imperfections thus she blew—
“In Purgatory still I sniff,
And I will gladly furnish, if
You wish it, such a dismal tale,
As well may frighten maidens all.”’

I leave out a good many lines, which I have forgotten:—

‘So sang she with the trumpet nose;
My own, with sorrow at her woes,
I loudly blew; and as she spoke,
The neighbouring sniffs the echoes woke.’

I believe the lines were originally Andrew Marvell's.”

It was Jones's hard fate in the Chorus, that whatever he quoted nobody seemed to take any notice. Venn's face betrayed

no signs of having heard what he said, while Lynn, as usual, smoked in his chair, saying nothing at all. For Lynn was one of those men who very seldom speak at all; and when they do, speak with more earnestness and energy than is generally heard.

Arthur, however, laughed; and the spectacles of Jones beamed gratefully on him.

"My cousin Philip," said Arthur, "started an infamous theory, some little time ago, that women prefer warmth to anything else in the world."

"Well," said Venn, "there may be something to be said for it. I believe that he is partly right. Women live in the house. Their ideas of life are those of the domestic circle. To have everything pleasant, comfortable, and elegant round them is quite a natural thing to desire. It is perhaps a brutal way of putting it, to say that they like to be warm. In the Chorus, we prefer a more indirect way of approaching a subject."

"Poor Phil takes direct views," said Arthur.

"Bring him here, and we will cure him," said Jones. "On the subject of women there is nothing so elevated as the views of the Chorus—the Sophoclean Chorus. We are, if we are nothing else, Sophoclean in our views of love.

'Love, the unconquered, thou whose throne
Is on youth's fair and rounded cheek,
Whom neither strong, nor brave, nor weak,
Can e'er escape—thee, thee we own.

Thou by thy master magic's aid
Cheatest keen eyes that else see well;
And o'er the loudest sniffing maid
Pourest the glamour of thy spell.

The nymph whose deepest, fondest prayer
Is for a sheltered nook and warm,
Glow with a thousand fancies rare,
Lit with thy pyrotechnic charm."

"I suppose you will say that Sophocles wrote that?" growled Lynn.

"A free imitation only. It may, perhaps, in some points excel the original. I say nothing."

"They talk a great deal," said Lynn, breaking his usual silence, "of educating women, and making them less frivolous. Of course, the immediate result is to send them to the opposite extreme. Now, of all the odious women you can meet, give me the strong-minded."

"Do not give her to me," said Jones.

"But it's all nonsense. They have made a college for them, and have Cambridge men

there to teach them. In other words, they are going to make them second-rate scholars and third-rate mathematicians. What on earth is the use of that?"

"Is it," asked Venn, "the function of the Chorus to discuss female education?"

"Why not?" returned Lynn. "By Jove! I've a good mind to have a vision too."

"Do," said Jones. "Two visions in the same evening is at least more than we could have expected."

Lynn smoked meditatively for a few moments.

"I dreamed a dream," he began. "I thought that I stood in the world of the future—the future of a hundred years. Woman was emancipated, as they said. Every woman did, like all men do now, what was right in her own eyes. They could preach, teach, heal, practise law, live alone, and be as free as any man can be now."

"Well?" asked Jones, for Lynn stopped.

"Well, I can't be as graphic as Venn was, because I have not the art of telling a story. I walked about the streets of London. I went into the houses, into the clubs, into the theatres—everywhere. The first thing that struck me was the entire mixture of the sexes. Women were everywhere. They drove cabs, they were markers at billiard tables, they kept shops, they plied trades, they were in the public offices—for everything was open to public competition. I talked to some of them. I found they were very much changed from what I remembered them. Not only were they coarse in appearance and manners, but they seemed to have lost the delicacy of woman's nature. The bloom was off the youngest of them. Men, too, had lost all their old deference and respect. There were none of the courtesies of life left; for the women had long since revolted against being considered the weaker sex. A new proverb had arisen—'The six-shooter makes all equal.' Every woman carried one, ostentatiously; not, I fancied, so much for self-protection as for purposes of attack. Their talk seemed loud and coarse, their jokes were club jokes, their stories were like those we hear on circuit and in mess-rooms. Their dress was altered, too. The old robes were discarded, and short kilts, with a tight-fitting jacket, seemed to be all the fashion. I asked my guide—did I say I had a guide?"

"You did not," said Jones. "Was he an angel?"

"Of course I had an angel. I asked him—or her—if they were all married women? Marriage, she told me, had been abolished by a large majority of women, as contrary to the true spirit of liberty. This was directly against the wish of the men, who, it seemed, desired to retain the custom. As, however, the ceremony is one which requires the consent of two, it was abolished. Then the men turned sulky, and formed a kind of union, or guild, for the protection of the marriage laws. For a time it appeared as if the world would be depopulated, and the statistics of the Registrar showed a falling-off in the number of births, which excited the gravest apprehensions. This league, however, fell to the ground from want of strength in the weaker brethren. After that all went well. The laws of property were altered, and an old law, belonging to an obscure Indian tribe in the Neilgherry Hills, was introduced. By virtue of this, property descended only through the mother. The interests of freedom were served, it is true; but it seemed to me as if there were some losses on the other hand, for all the men seemed dejected and lonely. There were no longer any high aims; no one looked for anything more than worldly advantage; no one dreamed of an impossible future, as we do now; there were no enthusiasts, no reformers, no religious thinkers, no great men. All was a dead level. I asked my guide if there were any exceptions—if what I saw really represented the actual world. She confessed it did; but she boasted, with pride, that the world was now reduced to a uniform mediocrity. No one looked for anything better, therefore no one tried for anything better; no one praised anything good, therefore no one tried to do anything good; there were no prizes for excellence, therefore no one was excellent. But it all seemed dreary, stupid, and immoral as a modern music hall; and I awoke, glad to find that it was, after all, only a dream. I forgot to tell you that there were no wives—there were no families. Children were sent out to be nursed, and the necessity of labour on the part of the women necessitated the abolition of the maternal instinct."

"Is that all?" asked Jones.

"It is," said Lynn; "and, before you make a rhyme about it—I can see you are meditating one—I just wish to state my moral. Women are only what their circle of men make them. If they are frivolous,

it is because the men are frivolous; if they are vain, it is because the men teach them vanity. But men have always to fall back upon their one great quality—their purity. Deference to a quality which they so seldom possess seems to me the truest safeguard for women, and the thing most likely to be a restraint upon men. Education, emancipation, suffrage—it is all infernal humbug. We confuse words. We call that education which is only instruction; we call emancipation what is a departure from the natural order; we take woman from her own sphere and put her into ours, and then deplore the old subjection of the sex. Good God! sir—man is the nobler as well as the stronger. His function is to work—to do; to drag the world along, to fight against and keep down the great surging sea of sin and misery that grows with our civilization and keeps pace with our progress. But woman's function is to stand by and help; to train the children, to comfort the defeated, and succour the wounded. Why, in the name of all the—all the saints, should she want to leave her own work and take ours?"

THE
STORY OF THE LABORATORIES
AT
THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

THE interesting and eventful history of the Royal Institution has lately been told by the treasurer to the society, Mr. William Spottiswoode. Such a narrative involves the recital of all the great scientific discoveries of Davy, Faraday, Tyndall, and Frankland, which have done so much for the advancement of knowledge, at the same time that they have made the institution famous. There is so much freshness and attractive simplicity in Mr. Spottiswoode's lecture, that we print it, in the assurance that it will please both the scientific and unscientific among our readers.

The treasurer of the Royal Institution said:—

The first dawn of our history is to be sought among those stormy years with which the last century drew towards its close, and out of which many new thoughts and aspirations of men took their birth.

Its character, in accordance with the views of its early promoter, Count Rumford, was

at first far more industrial than it eventually became. Its two great objects were "the general diffusion of the knowledge of all new and useful improvements, and teaching the application of scientific discoveries to the improvement of arts and manufactures, and to the increase of domestic comfort and convenience." The institution was to contain models, or actual specimens of fireplaces and kitchen utensils for cottages, farmhouses, and large dwellings; a complete laundry for a gentleman's family, grates and chimney-pieces, brewers' boilers, distillers' coppers, ventilators, lime-kilns, steam boilers, spinning wheels, agricultural implements, bridges, &c.; and at one time some eighteen or twenty young mechanics were actually boarded in the house.

From Count Rumford's final departure from England in 1802, we may date the decline of the industrial element; and from a report to the managers in 1803, it appears that, although chemistry had always been a primary object of the institution, yet from motives of economy, nothing more had been done in the way of either laboratory or apparatus than was necessary for the immediate purpose of the lectures. It was consequently proposed that the workshop should be added to the laboratory, and fitted with seats for 120 persons, and the forge adapted to chemical purposes. The report ends as follows:—"This laboratory will be equal, or indeed superior, to any in this country, and probably to any on the Continent."

It is interesting to contrast the verdict of 1873 with that of 1803. "Originally built," to quote Dr. Bence Jones's own words, "as a workshop for blacksmiths, fitted with a forge, and furnished with bellows, which only last summer left the institution, our chemical laboratory was probably the very worst in London."

The physical laboratory remained unchanged; and although Professor Tyndall, for himself, desired nothing more than to continue his researches in a place which his imagination filled with the recollections of his predecessors, he still acquiesced in the proposal for rebuilding, for the sake of his successors, and in the interest of the sister science of his colleague.

Thus much about the material fabric of the laboratories. Next as to the scientific work of which they have been the birth-place.

Of the great names connected with this building, foremost in order of time, and very high in scientific rank, stands that of Dr. Thomas Young. His "Theory of Light and Colours" will always stamp him as one "whose genius has anticipated the progress of science," and whose reputation has risen as men have better understood his worth. His first paper on the subject was presented to the Royal Society in November, 1801. It is not too much to say of him, that without the wave theory of light (of which he was one of the prime and main founders) to serve as a guiding-thread through the labyrinth of phenomena, the long series of discoveries which have in this place culminated in those of Tyndall, in radiation and absorption, would have been impossible.

It is often remarked that little rills, which have threaded their way from distant mountains, ultimately discharge themselves as mighty streams into the sea. Yet, between these two stages, they flow quietly, but not therefore less usefully, past smiling meadows and the haunts of men. And here is a little scientific pastoral—if it may be so called—flowing out of the highest conceptions of the theory of undulations, and furnishing—to use his own words—a simple instrument "for measuring the diameters of the fibres of different kinds of wool." The King at this time had his flock of merino sheep, and Sir Joseph Banks had the care of them at Kew. On his recovery from his first mental attack, the King would only call the P. R. S. his woolstapler.

Our next name is that of Davy, an account of whose discoveries would require a volume, and a bare recital of them would be long.

In 1806, when twenty-eight years of age, Davy did the work which formed his first Bakerian lecture, "On the Chemical Agencies of Electricity." Six years previously he had written, "Galvanism I have found, by numerous experiments, to be a process purely chemical." In the interim, water had been decomposed by electricity, and Davy began his researches with an inquiry into the changes produced in water by electricity. His main conclusion was, that "the kind of polarity of each element determined the electrical and chemical actions shown by it." The French Academy awarded him a medal for his work; and from these discoveries the fame of our laboratories took its rise.

The next five years of his life were devoted to experiments on polarity, and to other researches; and in 1811 he made the acquaintance of Mrs. Appreece; and in 1813, wrote to his brother, "In a few weeks I shall be able to return to my habits of study and research. I am going to be married to-morrow, and have a fair prospect of happiness with the most amiable and intellectual woman I have ever known." The issue of these hopes has been written by his biographers; but the disappointment of the last seventeen years of his life is illuminated by the invention, not less original in its conception than benevolent in its object, of the safety lamp.

The great value of this contrivance, and of questions arising out of it, will, I trust, be sufficient apology for diverging again from my story in order to mention some very important experiments now in progress by Mr. Galloway. Explosions, it is well known, occur even in cases where the safety lamp is used. And it has been noticed that in these cases they occur most frequently after the firing of a blasting shot in the neighbourhood; and as it was almost certain that the penetration of the fire-damp through the gauze of the lamp was not due to a sudden flow of gas from one part of the mine to another, experiments have been instituted to determine whether the transmission of the sound wave, or wave of compression, may not have been the means of producing the mischief.

Of the next great name connected with our institution—namely, Michael Faraday—of his life and his discoveries, the history has been already written—so far, indeed, as it can be written—by Bence Jones, by Tyndall, and by Gladstone. His volumes of notes, from 1831 to 1856, will give some idea of the amount of work which he did in our laboratory; and their value will be better appreciated through the consideration that, before these notes were made, no less than sixty of his scientific papers had been printed, nine of them in the "Philosophical Transactions."

For our present purpose it will be sufficient to say that the entire fabric of those brilliant and manifold contributions to human knowledge were wrought out within the walls of the Royal Institution.

Professor Frankland before coming to us had isolated the compound radicals methyl, ethyl, and amyl, and had proved their re-

semblance to hydrogen. He had also combined them with the metals zinc, tin, mercury, and boron. By this means he had obtained a very powerful chemical reagent, which proved of eminent service in subsequent operations. An instance of its power will be found in zinc-ethyl, which, by its rapid combination with oxygen of the air, bursts into spontaneous combustion as soon as a flask containing it is opened.

In 1866, Dr. Frankland determined, by a long series of calorimetric experiments, the maximum amount of force capable of being developed by given weights of the different foods commonly used by men.

In 1867, he investigated the effect of pressure (up to 20 atmospheres) upon the luminosity of flames of hydrogen and of carbonic oxides. He found that these flames, so feebly luminous at ordinary atmospheric pressure, burn with brilliant light under pressures from 10 to 20 atmospheres, and that the spectra of these brilliant flames is perfectly continuous. From the latter circumstance he infers that solar light may be derived from glowing gas, and not from incandescent solid or liquid matter.

These researches were suggested by an old experiment of Cavendish's, in which he exploded a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen, first under atmospheric pressure, and then under a pressure of from 10 to 12 atmospheres. In the first case there is much noise and little light; in the second, a brilliant flash and no noise. The labours of Dr. Frankland have rendered this experiment intelligible, and have correlated it with other phenomena.

Of Faraday's successor, John Tyndall, I am greatly at a loss how to speak. In this place his presence seems so near to us, his thoughts so subtle, his words—even when rung back to us from those busy cities far away on the other side of the Atlantic—so familiar and yet so stirring, that it behoves us that ours should be wary and few. Few men have brought so large a burden and bulk of contribution to the common stock of knowledge; but still fewer have inspired in his hearers so strong a love, such ardent enthusiasm, for the subjects of his research.

It is now twenty years since Professor Tyndall began his researches in our laboratory. During the first thirteen years he produced no less than thirteen papers, which were printed in the "Philosophical Transactions": on Sound, on Diamagnetism, on

Glaciers and Ice, on the Radiation and Absorption of Heat, and on Calorescence.

In these he established the important fact that if the various gases be arranged in order according to their power, first of radiating heat, and secondly of absorbing radiant heat, the order will be the same in both cases. He further proved that the chief absorbing action of our atmosphere on non-luminous heat is due to its aqueous vapour. He applied his discovery to the explanation of many meteorological facts: *e.g.*, the great daily range of the thermometer in dry climates; the production of frost at night in the Sahara; the cold in the table-lands of Asia, &c.

He discovered also the means of separating the invisible from the visible radiations, and proved that in the case of the electric light the former is no less than eight times as powerful as the latter. He also made the daring experiment of placing his eye at a focus of dark rays capable of heating platinum to redness.

Since 1866 his attention has been largely occupied in examining the action of heat of high refrangibility—instead of low—as an explorer of the molecular condition of matter.

In this investigation one obstacle to be overcome was the presence of the floating matter in the air. The processes of removal of these particles became the occasion of an independent research, branching out into various channels; on the one hand, it dealt with the very practical problem of the preservation of life among firemen exposed to heated smoke; and, on the other, it approached the recondite question of spontaneous generation.

He subjected the compound vapours of various substances to the action of a concentrated beam of light. The vapours were decomposed, and non-volatile products were formed. The decompositions always began with a blue cloud, which discharged perfectly polarized light at right angles to the beam. This suggested to him the origin of the blue colour of the sky; and as it showed the extraordinary amount of light that may be scattered by cloudy matter of extreme tenuity, he considered that it might be regarded as a suggestion towards explaining the nature of a comet's tail.

[The lecturer then exhibited the polarization of light scattered by small particles

suspended in the medium traversed by a beam from the electric lamp, employing for the purpose the chromatic effects due to the circular polarization of quartz.]

His volume of contributions to molecular physics in the domain of radiant heat, which contains only his original investigations on this subject, would alone suffice to show what is doing in the laboratory of our institution.

If we compare him to Faraday at the same time of his life, he has still many years of intellectual energy, the conversion of which into its scientific equivalent may, perhaps, be effected within these walls.

No one has regretted the destruction of the laboratory of Davy and Faraday more than Professor Tyndall. He almost prayed for the preservation of the place where their discoveries had been made; but as soon as he saw that in our struggle for existence such material aids as improved buildings would conduce alike to the progress of science and to the permanence of the institution, he withdrew his objections, and threw all his powers into making the new laboratories as perfect as possible for the good of his successors.

I add a few words on the reasons which led the managers to recommend the rebuilding of our laboratories, and the consequent demolition of the place where the great discoveries that I have touched upon were made. In the opinion of those best qualified to judge, our chemical laboratory was badly ventilated, badly lighted, badly drained, and quite unfit to be occupied for many hours daily. It was probably the very worst, and certainly all but the worst, chemical laboratory in London; and compared with more modern ones, both at home and abroad, it was nowhere. The physical laboratory had remained for nearly seventy years in its original state. At first it was said to be equal to any laboratory; but then there were hardly any in existence in this country; and during the last few years such splendid edifices have arisen in London, in Oxford, in Cambridge, in Manchester, and in Glasgow, and elsewhere, that the laboratory of Davy, of Faraday, and of Tyndall, was much inferior to the private laboratories of the professors who carry on their course of instruction in public rooms of still greater size and extent of resource. The main purpose of our laboratories is research, and

instead of offering by their excellence an inducement to professors to come and to stay, the one was a mere makeshift, the other a noble relic. Neither offered facilities which were not offered in a larger measure elsewhere. And those only who know what is going on both at home and abroad can form an adequate idea of the competition which, in this respect alone, will prevail for a generation to come.

By the construction of new laboratories this material disadvantage will be removed. Future professors will have buildings constructed to aid research. Your liberality has spared no judicious expense; and, so far as the site would admit, our laboratories will be as perfect as the skill of our architect and the advice of our professors can make them.

In conclusion, let me lay before you what must still be done, in order that there may be earned for the new laboratories a reputation comparable with that which has hitherto proved both our glory and our support.

Our first and foremost object, beyond bricks and mortar, and money, and apparatus, must be to find a succession of professors of the old type—men who love research. But even Faraday would perhaps have been compelled to leave us, on account of the smallness of the sum which we could afford him, had not the endowment of the chemical chair with £100 a year, by the late Mr. Fuller, happily intervened. This timely endowment was probably a critical turning-point in the history of the institution. We may not easily find successors worthy of the great names who have gone before them; but we may do much toward preventing mistakes in future appointments, by keeping steadily in view that the promotion of natural knowledge is our main object, and that instruction and amusement, and brilliant audiences, are all secondary to our principal purpose.

Secondly, when we have found professors of the type that I have described, our next need is that we may be able, from independent resources at the disposal of the institution, to offer them a remuneration which, all things taken into account, shall be an equivalent to what they would receive elsewhere. So that neither Government appointments, nor University professorships, nor the liberality of mercantile men, should be able to lure them from the path of discovery to tuition, to arts, or to manufactures.

The one act of wisdom, among the many

aberrations, of an eccentric member of Parliament, saved Faraday to us, and thereby, as seems probable, our institution to the country. The liberality of a Hebrew toy-dealer in the East of London has made the rebuilding of our laboratories possible. Mr. Alfred Davis, after paying his composition of sixty guineas, as a member of the institution, and three annual donations of twenty guineas for the promotion of research, at his death, in 1870, bequeathed £2,000 for the same purpose. His deafness prevented him from deriving any benefit from the lectures.

It is said that Mr. Fuller, the feebleness of whose constitution denied him at all other times and places the rest necessary for health, could always find repose and even quiet slumber amid the murmuring lectures of the Royal Institution; and that, in gratitude for the peaceful hours thus snatched from an otherwise restless life, he bequeathed to us his magnificent legacy of £10,000. If this evening's discourse shall have ensured one such blissful hour to any of his audience, your lecturer's efforts will not have been altogether in vain. But to each such happy individual he would express the hope that, as you have resembled Mr. Fuller in your experience of life, so may you emulate him in your liberality at death. In short, I would conclude almost in the words of old Bishop Andrews: "*Unum operæ meæ pretium abs te peto, hoc autem vehementer expeto, ut mei peccatoris meorumque in precibus interdum memor sis.*" Which being interpreted is:

For these my efforts I beg but one thing in return, and this I beg most earnestly—viz., that you will now and then remember me, a sinner against your patience and forbearance, in your prayers; and that you will also be mindful of our professorships in your wills.

SKETCHES OF IRISH LIFE.—VII.

THE SOIRÉE.

TWO hours and a half had elapsed since the events recorded in our last chapter.

William Hardy, Esq., dressed in his Sunday "duds," was on his own doorstep whistling "*The heart o' my Kitty,*" and stepping it over lightly with his feet. Suddenly he ceased that pleasant pastime, looked at his watch, and shouted in—

"Now, then, boys—twenty-five minutes to seven; ye'll better hurry yerselves."

"Jist comin'" was Thomas's reply, as he

emerged from one of the rooms of the kitchen, tying at his neckerchief bow and looking about for his boots simultaneously.

"An' the ticket says the tay's to be at seven sharp," continued William, as he pulled out and examined the card very closely.

Tam doubled his haste.

"An' that an early attendance is requested, as the meetin' is expected to be large," read Bill again.

Tam evidently drew some inference from this note, for he again renewed his exertions.

In five minutes we were on our way to the soirée, and in fifteen were hanging up our hats in the little hat-room of the school-house.

Bill, by way of cleaning his feet, imitated the movements of a hen scraping on the old mat, and opened the door.

"Morrow, Jimmy—is this what yer at?" was his first gentle salutation, addressed to the ticket-collector, as he handed his ticket to that important personage.

"Ay, Billy, this is what I'm at the night," was the reply.

"Well, that's all right," said William, permissively, looking about for a seat, and at the same time eyeing the contents of the different tables.

The room was a large one—very long and pretty wide—and presented a most animated appearance on our entrance.

There were six tables, each of which accommodated six persons on each side; and these tables were covered with very nice clean white sheets, surmounted, of course, by a sumptuous array of custards, currant buns, tarts, cheese cakes, split, toasted, and buttered baps—these were in piles about two feet high—loaf bread, loaf toast, &c., interspersed with small dishes of jelly and jam. At the farther end was a platform, on which was a piano, a reading stand, three chairs, and a concertina. The walls were covered with appropriate mottoes, printed with laurel leaves, and were also adorned with devices of various kinds.

As we appeared, there must have been between sixty and seventy people in the apartment, and there were a number of other arrivals afterwards. The faces of a goodly number of these were shining—*literally* shining—not with happiness, though they displayed that too, but with the very unusual application of soap and water, which,

in most of the cases, was doubtless a business of once a week. Not a few of them, too, seemed to experience considerable inconvenience with their hands—not knowing what to do with them so as to be easy and graceful.

Some very carefully folded and unfolded bits of paper; some apparently found out something very extraordinary in the toes of their boots; some sat bolt upright, and twirled their thumbs; and some behaved like natural ladies and gentlemen, as doubtless they were. After tea, however, every one was quite at home.

"See, Billy, jist go over to thon table nixt the platform, an' ye'll git a sate—over thonder, see," said the ticket collector, putting one arm round Bill's neck, and pointing to a table at the farther end of the room.

"Provisions good there?" inquired Bill, with just what you would know of a smile.

"Oh, fust-rate every place," replied the man, laughing, as we left him.

Bill and Tam—the former especially—were as cool as that very indigestible vegetable known by the name of a cucumber. When we were seated, those gentlemen, having duly surveyed the tables, began to testify their satisfaction by whistling the reel time of the "Highland fling," the one taking up the time when the other would for a few moments leave off.

"A say, Bill," at length said Tam, interrupting the concert.

"Well?"

"That a may niver cut corn, but it's that big long abergallion iv a daughter iv the clargyman's that's goin' to purside at our table."

"Howl' yer tongue, man; spake aisy. How do ye know? Oh, ay, in sowl, there she's comin' wi' the tay. Bad luck to that fella fur sennin us here."

The bustle of bringing in the tea was now begun; and awkward stewards were running about with polished-up tin kettles in one hand, and knives, forks, and plates in the other, knocking up against everybody, and occasionally knocking up against each other, at the imminent risk of knocking the plates to pieces on the ground.

The young lady to whom Thomas had so flatteringly adverted now sat at the head of our table, and, certainly, her appearance was in nowise attractive. She was a slim, tall, and extremely prudish-looking person, of about, I should say, thirty-five winters—I

cannot say summers, for there was nothing summer-like about her—with a face that seemed wrinkled and soured by disappointments, and a manner that was coldly exact and sinister. She was leaning back in her chair, with her arms lightly folded, and her mouth settled into an expression of immovable propriety.

She was the eldest daughter of the parish clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Goodwin; and it is unnecessary to say her name was *Miss Goodwin*.

"Boys, look at that craythur, the way she has her mouth twisted into small plaits, as if nobody had any right in the consarn but herself," whispered Tam, indignantly, as he beheld her posture.

"Ay," said Bill, improvingly adding—"twisted into about the size of a waistcoat button-hole, an' its half-way roun' her head."

At this juncture, the Rev. Mr. Goodwin, whom I had not previously seen, appeared upon the platform; and, after saying a few words to the company, made a short prayer, which was listened to with the most profound reverence by all.

Scarcely, however, had the rev. gentleman uttered the last word, while you yet could have heard a pin falling, when a loud rattle, accompanied by as loud a shout and three or four screams, was heard in a corner of the room. On looking over, a very much battered tea-pot was to be seen lying on the floor, with the lid off, and its contents at large, while a small plate was describing a circle round the remains of five or six large ones; and over and above all this was to be seen one of the stewards, twisting, writhing, and making all kinds of mysterious faces, while at the same time he gave a tolerable imitation of a Highland sword dance. Every one stood a moment in silent astonishment; and, while they were thus profitably engaged, the steward, continuing his strange manoeuvres, made for the door, and disappeared through that aperture.

Then there was a general titter, which ended in a hearty laugh, at which Miss Goodwin rose, and waving her hand with a commanding air, said, with great indignation—

"Friends, friends!" and then everybody laughed far harder than ever.

This little noise having subsided, the tea-makers began to pour out the tea.

"Sugar and cream?" said Miss Goodwin, addressing the first person on her right.

"What—beg pardon, mem," said the unsophisticated rustic, correcting himself just in the nick of time.

"Will you have sugar and cream in your tea?" said Miss Goodwin again, with a slight tone of impatience.

"Well, if it's all the same to you, mem," was the reply.

"I dare say you all take cream and sugar in your teas?" continued her ladyship, looking down the middle of the table at nobody.

"Sartinly we do—when we can git it," ventured Bill, by way of a joke; the reward of which was a withering glance from the lady.

"Mother o' Mosey, Bill, luck at the size o' them cups!" said Tam, in disappointed surprise, as his eye caught the diminutive forms of those utensils.

"It's all right," replied Bill, philosophically—"it's all right. We'll give her the more to do."

"Be kind enough to hand that up to the head of the table—thank you. *You*, please, hand this up—thank you. And *you* this—thank you. And this—thank you. And this—thank you."

Thus were the cups of tea distributed, and the eating began. The first thing that disturbed the nerves of Miss Goodwin was a breach of etiquette by one of the rustics immediately to her left; who, finding his tea too hot to sip, innocently thought to reduce it to a proper heat in his saucer, for which purpose he was no doubt ignorant enough to think saucers were made. Miss Goodwin simply *could not* bear this. She *must* check him. She leant across the table, and said, in a low voice—

"Excuse me; but you should not do that."

"Beg pardon, mem?" said the rustic, turning the side of his head to her.

"I say you should not pour out your tea into your saucer. It's very ill-bred."

"Well, it's scaldin' hot, mem."

"No matter, you should not do it."

The man seemed, quite naturally I think, to consider this hard enough; but refrained from doing it, and boldly scalded his mouth, in an endeavour to drink some of the tea out of the cup.

Now it so happened that a number of others, who were the victims of soft mouths, Tam and Bill among the rest, were just

about to cool their teas in a similar manner, when they heard their compeer reprimanded. They all hesitated, and looked from their cups to one another, and from one another to their cups. Bill settled the difficulty. Having once more found that the tea was too hot, he quietly poured some into his saucer, and began to make himself at home, at the same time saying, in a voice loud enough to be heard by all at the table—

"Well, I'm not goin' to scald *my* mouth for any sich nonsense."

Tam followed his example, and one by one the rest did likewise. Miss Goodwin drew herself up, and fixed a stern, contemptuous look on Bill; but he was too busy either to know or care anything about that lady or her looks, and so the matter dropped.

The toast and butter was disappearing in a most miraculous manner; the bap-piles were rapidly becoming less. In two minutes the first round of tea was no more.

The lady at the head of the table had but taken three sips from her cup, when she saw every one patiently waiting for a "dhrop more." Once, twice, thrice, was she compelled to refill their cups before she had herself finished her first cup—a fact that did not tend to make her much more amiable. Some of the ladies now began to fall off—not that they couldn't have eaten just as much as the men; but then, you know, it wouldn't have been genteel. Bill had finished his third cup; and, with the resignation of Job, was awaiting his fourth. Just to beguile the time, he reached over for a tart, placed it in his mouth, and—that was all about that. Tam took a regard for a cheese-cake, and showed his affection in a similar manner. His fourth cup being at length served, with evident reluctance, to Bill, that gentleman once more proceeded to make himself happy; and, accordingly, all edibles within the semicircle of which his arm formed the radius became, with magic celerity, more and more rare. The fourth and fifth cups were soon finished, and William was on the look-out for a sixth, just as a concluder. Miss Goodwin, however, obstinately refused to look his way, and seemed determined that he should have no more. William was just as determined that he should; he did not care much about the tea, but he was not going to be "done." No doubt the spectral form of the "white shillin'" appeared to his mental eye, and

further confirmed his resolution. Having vainly rattled his cup some time, a desperate thought struck him, which he resolved to carry into instant execution, if the maiden at the table-head did not at once give him a chance of requesting more tea. She did *not* give him the chance, and the consequence was Bill *did* carry the desperate thought into execution.

"Wud ye jest put a dhrop more slop in that thimmel, mem?" said he, as broadly as he could speak it, while he reached out his cup in his right hand, and seized another tart with his left.

On these words being uttered, the sounds of suppressed laughter were heard all round the table; but on Bill dismissing the tart in his wonted cool and summary manner, the risible faculties of the spectators got entirely the better of their sense of decorum, and the laughter was unchecked—loud and general.

Miss Goodwin was, as Tam afterwards expressed it, mad and worse.

"Silence, silence!" she commanded, totally beside herself. "I shall leave the table at once if this disgraceful conduct is continued. I wonder you have no more sympathy with ignorance; but, indeed, what can I expect!"

And she lowered the two ends of her mouth and raised the one end of her nose.

She, nevertheless, filled Bill's cup, and handed it to the person next her to hand to him. And once more things began to disappear in a manner that nothing but evaporation would explain.

The clergyman here approached the table, and addressed his daughter.

"Martha, my dear, how is it I do not see Mr. Coodle in the company? I hope you did not forget to invite him?"

"No, father," replied she, coldly; "I am not in the habit of forgetting things in that way. His wife says he is slightly indisposed, but that, if possible, he may come over after tea."

Now our ancestors have handed us down a very wise and well-known apophthegm—speak of a certain old gentleman of considerable note, and he will forthwith make his appearance; and, sure enough, in this instance our ancestors were right.

Scarcely had Miss Goodwin pronounced that charming word tea, when the door partly opened, and the head and shoulders of Mr. Coodle presented themselves.

He cast his left eye around the company,

and, observing us, cautiously crossed the threshold, and, with a mind-ye-I'm-all-right sort of air, approached us. He was dressed in a suit of black that looked as if it had just been black-leaded, and he had apparently been enjoying a lengthened doze.

The clergyman stepped forward to meet him.

"Why, Mr. Coodle, I have just been asking about you. I'm delighted to see you, sir. I hope you feel better," said he, grasping him by the hand, and shaking it very heartily.

"So do I—so am I—so do I," returned Mr. Coodle, smiling blandly, as he returned the shake of the hand, in a desperate endeavour to look at once both perfectly sober and delighted; whereas it was perfectly plain that he was wishing Mr. Goodwin comfortably removed to the Antipodes.

"And are you better—and what was the matter?" continued the clergyman.

"Oh, yes, thank you—quite, thank you—entirely, thank you—slight in—in—disposition," replied Mr. Coodle, carefully feeling his way in the pronunciation of his words.

"Oh, is that all? Nothing serious, then—nothing serious? Probably it's only biliousness, or something of that kind. I was beginning to be alarmed for you in these times of sickness."

"No, no, no—oh, bless ye, no. Oh, dear, bless you, not at all," replied Mr. Coodle, with great deliberation, striving very hard to look thoughtful. "Merely—a—merely—a—" (it took this to prepare him for the words he was about to utter, and after all he broke down)—"merely—a—girinal d'bility."

"Oh, if that's all, you'll soon get all right. I see you're very weak, though—not looking well at all. However, these little troubles *will* occur, and it's for us patiently to bear them in a Christian-like manner. But, come, they're removing the tea-things. You'll take a seat on the platform, won't you?"

"Well—a—Mr.—a—Mr.—a— 'Deed, I forget your name."

"Goodwin," said that gentleman.

"Oh, ay, Mr. Goodwin. Well, I say, Mr. Goodwin—a—may be you would—may be you could—well—a—I would rather not, Mr. Goodwin. Ye see, Mr. Goodwin, I have some friends here—I say I have some friends here, Mr. Goodwin, and the truth is—I—wouldn't—care—to—leave them."

"Oh, all right—quite right, Mr. Coodle. Don't let me take you from your friends by any means. Well, I shall see you before the close of the evening."

And Mr. Goodwin, nodding to Mr. Coodle, went to take his place upon the platform; which Mr. Coodle, returning the nod, and uttering a very equivocal "Yes," suffered him to do without shedding a single tear.

During this conversation, Bill was, in his own most expressive language, as "busy as a bum-bee."

When Mr. Coodle turned towards him, he was putting his cup into that singular rotary movement which old women call rinsing; though whether the rinsing is done for the purpose of stirring up the sugar, or for the purpose of swallowing tea-leaves and all, I never could find out.

Tam, I may mention here, had got alongside a blooming damsel of about twenty Mays, and was so rapt with her charms that a skilful surgeon might have bled him without his knowing anything about it.

"Well, Billy—my brave Billy—how did ye get home," said Mr. Coodle, with strange familiarity, to William.

The latter gentleman brought the bottom of his cup down upon his saucer with a force that cast a doubt over their future soundness, pushed both away from him, rubbed his mouth with a red-spotted handkerchief, and gave vent to the simple words—

"About right."

"That's right, my friend—that's right. May be ye think I'm a wee bit the worse, ye know; but not at all—not at all. Look here—whisper." Here he applied his mouth to Bill's ear, as though he had something of great importance to communicate. "The wife put me to bed—put me to bed; and I slep'—slep' for two three hours—two three hours."

"A'll warrant wud ye," was William's calm reply.

"Yis, and—"

Here he was interrupted by one of his little boys, four more of whom, and three girls, were at a table in the opposite corner of the room.

"Da, a say, da—give us a ha'penny," was the modest request of his offspring.

"Eh, sonny? What do ye say, sonny?" inquired the parent.

"Ye might give us a ha'penny," said "sonny" again.

The reply of the parent was brief, emphatic, and memorable—

“Wipe yer nose, dear; and run away and amuse yerself.”

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—IV.

THE next night I was called on to give my experience of colonial adventure, and being at a loss for a subject, I had to fall back on an accident which occurred to me some years ago, and was nearly putting an end to me. Perhaps my readers wish it had succeeded, as in that case the infliction of reading this would have been spared them.

Readers, be generous, forgive, and read

THREE NIGHTS IN A FORSAKEN CLAIM.

Your tale of last night, Stevens, reminds me of an adventure I had in the same part of Victoria, some ten or twelve years ago. I was, as you know, living not very far from the station where you were, and know all that country perfectly; and a nicer place it would be difficult to find in all Victoria. That is to say, as it was then, for now it is sadly changed, and from being wild, romantic, and untamed, is now, as our friend Pat would say, in a high state of low cultivation. The flat along the creek, where your home station was, is nearly all ploughed up and closely fenced in; and the beautiful clumps of wattle trees which used to be so charmingly covered with their yellow, sweet-scented blossoms have all disappeared, excepting where here and there, perhaps, in a narrow, sharp bend of the creek, where there was not room for the plough, a few solitary trees are still, like the “last rose of summer left blooming alone;” and like it, these too seem to pine for their “lovely companions all faded and gone.” Even the sides of the Mount Campbell ranges are now ploughed and enclosed: rather different from what it was when you and I, Stevens, were shepherding on them, that year I stayed with you. Jolly days those were! Do you remember how we used each to catch a wether, and, mounting on their backs, have a race after the other sheep? Many a fall we got; for, I can assure you, a strong wether is not easily ridden, particularly down hill. And what with hunting for ‘possums, kangaroo rats, bandicoots, iguanos, and snakes—although I must confess I never wished to find the last two—our time was so much occupied

that we had little if any to spare in attending to the sheep; in consequence of which we lost about three hundred, and knew nothing about it until they were found again accidentally.

I have often wondered since that we were entrusted with the charge of a flock of sheep; but at that time every one was at the diggings, and it was next to impossible to get hands, even by offering the most fabulous wages; so that, even children as we were—we were about thirteen—we were in high request; and, perhaps, did as well after all as men would have done, for we left the sheep so much to themselves that they soon got fat enough to sell at the diggings.

What capital fun we had, too, bathing in the water-holes along the creek, in spite of the countless myriads of leeches which populated them and prevented our remaining still for a moment. We used to fish for crawfish with a small piece of mutton tied to the end of a bit of string, which we sunk and allowed to remain at the bottom until we felt a crawfish walking off with it; then we slowly raised it, and when we caught sight of Mr. Crawfish, quietly put one hand below and made a snatch at him. When we were fortunate enough to borrow a gun, our happiness knew no bounds, and it was a bad day for any living thing that came within range; for we were pretty certain to hit, if we did not kill, whatever we fired at. You see, we never fired except when our mark was quite still, and then, if possible, rested the gun against a tree or old log.

But to get on with my tale.

It was some few years after this that what I am going to tell you happened.

Some cattle happened to be missing from the station where I was then living, and I was sent alone to look for them—getting orders to try, if possible, and get close to a mob of wild cattle, which were running in a scrub a few miles off, and to see if the lost ones had joined them. As it was fine, bright moonlight, I thought my best plan was to wait until the cattle came to a flat where the water-holes were, to drink, which they were nearly certain to do at night. I could then have a good view of them, and would be able to make quite certain as to whether the stray ones were there or not.

My plan was to start in good time in the morning, and either find or make a hiding place as close as possible to the large

water-hole which the cattle generally frequented most.

Accordingly, I started early one morning in February, taking with me some cooked mutton and damper, and, of course, a quart pot, some tea, sugar, and a blanket. I remember the ride that morning so well. As I cantered down by the side of the Campaspie, numbers of wild duck rose, and every now and then a pigeon crossed in front of me, making that delightful singing noise with its wings which only a "bronze-wing" can. The magpies seemed more musical than usual that morning; and at every clump of wattles I passed, I was certain to see one or two hopping about, or sitting on a bough, and to hear their sweet, plaintive, and flute-like notes, which resembles no other bird's song that I know of. The air felt so fresh, cool, and pleasant; the sun, which had not long risen, cast long exaggerated shadows across my path, and had not yet strength enough to take the edge, as it were, off the sharp morning air, which felt crisp, and seemed to provoke an energy of which my horse appeared to partake, as he cantered along with his ears pricked forward, tossing his head and shying for fun at every bit of burnt stump he saw.

The summer mornings in Australia are simply delicious; but, alas, how short! Soon the sun rises over the tree-tops, making every drop of dew on the bright green leaves of the young box trees shine like diamonds, and causing every blade of grass to glisten. All nature seems to be smiling and rejoicing as it welcomes the birth of another day.

"Ah! day so soft, so clear, so bright:
Sweet bridal of the earth and sky.
The dews shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die."

The air is sweet with the scent of flowers, not loaded or heavy, but fresh and invigorating. Thousands of birds dart through among the trees; flocks of cockatoos mingle their discordant cries with the musical notes of the magpie, or the strange human-like laugh of the laughing jackass; and parrots, of many and bright-coloured plumage, chatter and flit about.

But slowly, as the sun gains strength, all this changes. The hum of countless insects gradually begins, and soon increases, until it becomes incessant. The dew quickly disappears, leaving leaves and grass dry and

parched. The scent from the wattle trees becomes overpoweringly strong and oppressive. Seldom now do you hear the note of a bird, except the screech of a cockatoo, or the shrill "cheep-cheep" of a hawk in search of its prey. As you ride slowly along, your drowsy, languid horse occasionally starts and bounds to one side to avoid a snake, either coiled up asleep in the sun or crawling and twisting along its winding path, as eager to avoid as to be avoided. Or, perhaps, a hideous iguano, hearing your approach, hurries to the nearest tree, up which it climbs in a corkscrew fashion, every now and then stopping to peer round the side at you, and looking like a horrible something between a lizard and an alligator; but, in spite of evil appearances, perfectly harmless, and I believe, although I have not tried it, capital eating. By mid-day, the heat is intense, and you are glad to seek the shade of a friendly gum or box tree, and there shelter yourself and your horse from the scorching rays of the sun for an hour or two.

After riding some hours, I reached the water-hole where I intended taking up my quarters for the night; and after taking my saddle off, and hobbling my horse, I lighted a fire and made some tea, before making a search for a convenient hiding-place. I intended, if I could not find a natural cover, to collect branches and make a sort of "mie-mie," as the blacks call it, close to the edge of the creek.

In looking about, I came on a hole where some diggers had been "prospecting"—that is, Bill, searching for gold, or trying the ground to see if it is worth anything—from a digger's view, I mean. I think "sampling" would not be a bad word to use.

This hole was in the bed of the creek, on the side opposite the scrub in which the cattle generally were, and was some twenty feet deep. It struck me at once that here was the very thing I wanted, if I could only contrive some dodge for making a platform to stand on. The plan I took was very simple; but I rather flatter myself it was novel and ingenious.

The sides of the hole were very much worn by the action of water—evidently the creek had flowed in and filled it at some time or other; and the bottom was much wider than the top, being, I should think, at least nine or ten feet across, whilst the top

was only between four and five. It was, therefore, impossible to get pieces of wood fixed across inside; and, besides, I had no axe to cut them to the right size.

Along the side of the creek there were numbers of branches of trees, and even trees themselves, which had been washed down by the floods; and from amongst these I selected four large forked branches, and dragged them to the mouth of the hole. These I placed in the hole with the single end downwards, keeping them as far apart as possible, so that each looked like a letter V. Then I got two straight pieces, about four feet long each, and let them down, so that the ends rested in the bottom part of the V of each branch. I had now the frame of a platform; and all that I required was to lay branches across until I had a floor I could stand on. This I soon did. Then I got fresh branches, with the leaves on, and stuck them on the projecting ends of the forked branches, making the whole—I don't intend that for a pun—look as like a bush as possible.

After finishing this, I gathered small twigs, and made a very comfortable bed by laying them on the floor of the platform, and spreading my blanket over them.

I was now prepared for a night—or even two or three if necessary—and set to work getting my supper ready; for by the time I had completed my work the sun had set. After getting my supper, I took my stock of provisions, and a quart pot of tea, into my hiding-place, thinking it safer not to leave it outside, in case of not finding it there in the morning. I then rolled myself up in my blanket, lay down, and soon fell asleep.

In an hour or two I awoke, and heard the lowing of cattle not very far off; and before long I saw a large mob of cattle coming leisurely down the flat to the water. The moon was nearly full, so that it was nearly as light as day, and I could see them quite distinctly, and when they came close could even make out the brands of some of them. It was great fun watching them, as they came to drink within a few feet of me, unsuspecting of being so close to a human creature; and I soon discovered the missing cattle amongst them, and also two old working bullocks which had been absent without leave for nearly a year, and had long ago been given up as dead.

The greatest fun was to watch the manoeuvres of some of them when they saw

the remains of my fire, as they passed it on their way to the water-hole. Every now and then one would trot past, and, catching sight of it, would give a jump and a side kick, making that peculiar kind of whistle we hear so often in the stock-yard when drafting or branding, and which is anything but pleasant when heard behind your back, being rather too suggestive of a pair of sharp horns ready to give you a rise in line, which may eventuate in a fall in death.

One young bull, who was evidently of an inquiring turn of mind, or who, perhaps, wanted to show his companions how he could stand fire, went and put his nose close to it, no doubt surprised at the sensation of heat he experienced. Unfortunately, his meditations were cruelly and abruptly interrupted by the thoughtless conduct of a young heifer, which, running down to drink, came against him with such force as to knock his nose into the hot embers. He gave a jump and a quick, low bellow, then going back a few paces, rushed at the poor innocent fire, and scattered it all about; at the same time, judging from his curious exhibition of agility immediately afterwards, receiving a warmer reception than he expected. The two old "Wookers" looked at the fire in a knowing sort of way; perhaps it reminded them of the sad days when they passed their time in dragging drays, loaded with bales of wool, along dusty roads, to the music of the cracking of a bullock-whip, with the oaths and curses of some old convicts as a chorus. If so, I am sure they must have appreciated their present free life all the more for their previous troubles and the heavy *yokes* they had borne. One of them came slowly up to the branches I had placed over the hole, and began rubbing himself on one of the projecting ends of the forks, making it shake in a very unpleasant way; so much so, that I determined to frighten him away, even if in doing so I started off the whole lot. So, taking one of the branches, I gave him a good hard blow over the nose. He at once started, and turning round suddenly, got his horns caught amongst the branches, and giving two or three bounds to free himself, split two of the V forks, letting me, platform, branches, and all, in a confused heap, to the bottom of the hole. How I escaped being smashed in the fall I cannot tell. I have heard that there is a spécial Providence who looks after and guards children,

drunken men, and fools from harm—perhaps I may come under the latter head; but be that as it may, I got to the bottom little the worse, excepting a few bruises and scratches. I could hear the sound of cattle galloping away, frightened by the extraordinary noise my fall had made; and I thought I heard the hobble chain of my horse also.

Of course, it was no use my trying to get out in the dark; so I made as good a bed as I could, and lay down. I can't say I slept much, as I kept fancying there might be snakes or centipedes in along with me; so I lay listening to the howling of a dingo, which came and took his quarters up close to me, and, judging from the noises he made, was evidently in a very melancholy frame of mind. He appeared to cause a laughing jackass a vast amount of amusement, however; for the beast of a bird (I am making a bull of the bird, I find) every now and then burst out into fits and shrieks of the most aggravating laughter. I could not help fancying he knew I was in a trap, and was mocking at me. Between these two companions and my dread of reptiles, I passed about as unpleasant a night as my worst enemy could have wished for me.

Nor did I feel any more comfortable when it was light enough for me to see my position. I found the bottom of the hole was quite fifteen feet across, and saw that it was quite impossible for me to climb up the sides. I tried to make a long pole by tying one piece of wood to the other; and if I had only had enough stuff to tie them with, I think I could have got out in this way; but after tearing my shirt into strips, I found I had not much more than enough to take me half-way, so I had to give this idea up, and left the half-formed pole standing as it was.

Then I thought of making a mound of earth by knocking in the overhanging sides; but after nearly smothering myself in the attempt, by letting a huge mass tumble on me, I gave that up also.

There was no mistake about it—here I was, in a regular trap, and with no prospect of getting out unless help came; and of that there was not much likelihood, because they knew at the station I might be gone for two or more days; and even if they got alarmed and searched for me, it was not very probable they would ever think of looking for me in this old deserted claim. No; I could not disguise the fact—it was a bad look-out.

I ought rather to say, no look-out; for it was precious little I could see from where I was.

You, Stevens, perhaps remember what extraordinarily and unusually heavy falls of rain there were that year, and how the whole country was completely flooded, and every little creek was swollen into a river of terrible size, making them impassable except by swimming?

"Yes," said Stevens; "I never saw such a sudden flood before or since. Why, one morning I rode over to Forrest Creek to M——'s for letters. The creek, at the home station, when I started, was nearly without water, and when I got back it was as much as I could do to cross it. The rain seemed to fall in a continuous sheet of water, and the ground was so hard from the long continued heat—for it had been very hot and dry for some months before—that it did not soak in as it usually does, but ran off in little streams to feed and swell the creeks into respectable-sized rivers."

Well—I continued—that evening it began to rain, and stuck steadily at it all night; and the only change in the morning was that it appeared to be raining harder than ever, if possible. This was very disheartening to me, as I felt sure no one would think of looking for me whilst the rain continued, as they would conclude I had gone to some station for shelter. The only comfort I had was that I had now plenty of good water to drink. All I had to do was to scrape a hole in the clay, and let the rain collect; so there was no danger of my being in want of that for some time at least. By night I could hear the creek coming down, and gradually the sound increased to such an extent that it became a roar like the rushing of a mob of cattle.

TABLE TALK.

THE only effectual way of rousing public opinion in England, and making Englishmen prepare for any sort of concerted action, is to keep dinning a thing into their ears. It is on this principle that we have the pleasure to call the attention of our readers to a little railway accident which was successfully brought about a few days since near Stafford. The only persons killed were the driver and fireman of the train. The case is interesting only because of the alleged cause of the accident. In-

stead of the usual luggage train wandering about the permanent way at its own sweet will, ready at any opportune moment to be run into by, or to "collide" with, a passing passenger train, or the customary uncertainty about points and signals, we find that these men lost their lives through the engine they drove being in the habit of giving "jumps." The guard of the train said "he saw the engine give a 'jump,' and did not remember much after that; but another person was in the van, and when he saw that the engine had left the metals he told his companion to hold fast. He was rendered unconscious, and found himself on the embankment, but could not tell how he got there." The "general manager" of the Stafford and Uttoxeter line, Mr. J. B. Cooper, was very much surprised and shocked to hear, with reference to the engine, that "it is not the first time it has been off the track; and whispers might have been heard yesterday among the shed-men and others, who saw it was an old, 'used-up' affair, and had recently undergone repairs." Evidence of witnesses—that "engine had a habit of jumping." Evidence of "general manager"—that engine was of most approved type and construction. Two men killed, others alarmed, and a new danger added to travelling by rail—viz., engines that have a practice of "jumping" without giving any notice of such intention.

ICE is a necessity and a luxury. We take it with fever and with champagne, and in many other ways we make use of it. There are two kinds of ice known to dealers in that commodity, foreign and English. We have obviously a better chance of learning the component parts of the native than of the imported article. A correspondent of a Birmingham paper thus warns his fellow-townsmen against the former:—"Will you let me warn those who use ice to take care where it comes from? On Thursday and Friday carts were busy carrying ice from the piece of water known as 'Harrison's Hole.' This is a worked-out clay-pit, which has been filled up with the rain-washings from dirty streets in which all kinds of slops are emptied, the ooze from rubbish that is shot there to be got rid of, and the sewage from about a hundred houses, which is carefully drained into this common sink. The pool is also the grave in which the cast-off dogs and cats of the district

swell and rot. The water—if a mixture of this noisome sort can be called water—is a nuisance and a danger to the neighbourhood. The filthy scum that floats into it and on it is enough to breed fever for the whole town. The stench in summer is horrible. It is a new phase of the evil that the foul compound should be sold in a solid form, perhaps for use at dinner parties in Edgbaston, and by patients in our hospitals. Diners-out will have to meet a new danger if the salmon or turbot has been preserved and packed in ice from 'Harrison's Hole.' Doctors will have to take care that they do not give a mixture of sewage, stagnant water, and decayed cat, in the form of ice, to patients suffering from inflammation or typhoid fever." This gentleman signs himself "Highgate." Now there is a Highgate near London, and there are ponds in the parish. All we have to say to the buyer of ice is *caveat emptor*. There are fifty-two weeks in a year in which ice is consumed, more or less. Of these, only one week, as yet, has been frosty; and, in face of a scanty supply, dealers will not be very careful in choosing the localities from which they fill their carts. But this scarcity should make consumers careful what they buy to drink with their wine.

WE MAY ADD the following to our note of last week on the "rules and conditions for the spirit circle." We learn that it is necessary—

"When the table begins to tilt, or when raps occur, not to be too impatient to get answers to questions. When the table can answer questions by giving three tips or raps for 'Yes,' and one for 'No,' it may assist in placing the sitters properly. The spirits or intelligences which produce the phenomena should be treated with the same courtesy and consideration as you would desire for yourselves if you were introduced into the company of strangers for their personal benefit. At the same time, the sitters should not on any account allow their judgment to be warped or their good sense imposed upon by spirits, whatever their professions may be. Reason with them kindly, firmly, and considerately. Sometimes, the table and other objects are lifted, moved from place to place, and even through closed doors. Patiently and kindly seek for tests of identity from loved ones in the spirit-world, and exercise caution respecting spirits who make extravagant pretensions of any kind."

For our own part, we should be disposed to "exercise" this "caution" respecting all sorts of "spirits," whether they made "extravagant pretensions," or whether they did not.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

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February 22, 1873.

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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XIX.



It was late, even for Hartley Venn, when he went to bed on that Wednesday night; and when, at six in the morning, a fierce knocking came to his

bed-room door, it was some fifteen minutes or so before he could quite make up his mind that he was not dreaming. At last, however, he roused himself sufficiently to be certain that somebody was actually knocking. Mrs. Peck was, in fact, the disturber of his rest. She was beating on the panel with a hammer, in despair of being able to awaken him in any other way. He half opened the door, cautiously, and peered through to discover the cause of this phenomenon.

"Mrs. Peck," he said, "we have known each other now for a great many years, and

I never before remember you doing so ridiculous a thing as to call me at six, the very hour when civilized life is on the point of recovering its strength. Pray, Mrs. Peck, do you take me for the early worn?"

The old woman pushed the door open, and came into his bed-room, looking curiously round. She was not, taking her at the best, a pleasant specimen of womanhood to look upon; but this morning she looked even less attractive than usual. For her false front was slipping off sideways; her black stuff dress was covered with mud; her wrinkled old face was begrimed with dirt, and puckered up with trouble; and Venn, rubbing his eyes, gradually awoke to the consciousness that she was staring at him with frightened eyes, and that something had happened.

Realizing this, he stepped back and got into bed, disposing the pillows so that he could give audience with an air of preparedness. Nothing, he used to say, speaking after the manner of Charles the Second's period, makes a man look more ridiculous in the eyes of his mistress than an appearance of haste; and whatever happens, it may as well be received with dignity, which only costs a little time for reflection. Now, there was no possibility, short of genius for dignity, of preserving a dignified appearance while shivering on a mat with but one garment on, and that of the thinnest and lightest kind. Therefore, he retreated to the bed; and, propped up by the pillows, prepared to receive Mrs. Peck with self-respect. Not one thought of danger to himself: not one gleam of suspicion about the girl.

The old woman came in, confused and trembling. She looked about in a dazed sort of way, and then sank into a chair, crying—

"Oh, Mr. Venn, what have you done with her? What have you done with her?"

All Venn's dignity vanished. He fell half back on the pillow for a moment, and then

started up, and caught the old woman by the arm.

"Done with her? Done with her? Done with her? Speak, Mrs. Peck. Tell me what you mean."

"You know, sir," she said. "You know who I mean. What have you done with her, I say? What have you done with the girl as you petted and made so much of, till she wasn't fit company for her old grandmother? Oh, I aint afraid to speak. Where is she, I say? Where have you gone and hid her away? But I'll find her—if I search all London through, I'll find her. Oh, my fine grand-daughter, that was why he wanted you up here every day, and nothing too good for you; and lessons every day, and grand clothes. And what am I to say now to the people that cried out how good she was? And where, oh, where is my 'lowance for her?"

Venn stared at her, speechless.

"Give her back to me, Mr. Venn. Nobody knows nothing. It shall all be as it used to be. Only let her come back, and we can make up a story and stop their mouths. Nobody knows."

"Woman!" cried the man, not knowing what he said, "woman! you are mad—where is Lollie?"

"And you, too, that I thought the best of men. You that made her a little lady, so that all the people envied her. And one pound ten a week gone! You that made her so good that not a creature could find a word to say against her. But you are all wicked alike. And now it's you. And after all these years. And I'm to lose my 'lowance, and go into the workus."

Her voice changed into a sort of wail, for her feelings were divided between the loss of her grand-daughter and the probable loss of her allowance.

"Give her back to me, Mr. Venn. It isn't only the loss of the one pound ten a week, paid regular, though the Lord knows it's the parish I must come on. Give her back to me, and I'll go on my bended knees to you. Say she's good, and I'll pray for you all the days of my life; and go to St. Alban's, though I can't abide their ways, a purpose. And one pound ten a week. Oh, give her back to me! Tell me where you've put her."

She sat down, exhausted, in the chair by the bedside.

"It isn't the 'lowance I mind so much;

nor it isn't the girl, because we never had much to say to each other, her and me. But it is the people. And they will talk. And one pound ten a week's an awful sum to lose. And see, Mr. Venn—I know that gentlemen will be gentlemen; and though the workmen curse, the pretty ones always goes to the gentlemen. That's right, I suppose! though why it's right, God only knows. But give her back to me; for I am an old woman, and respected, by reason of my grand-daughter. Give her back to me, Mr. Venn. I mind an old story about a man and a ewe lamb, the only one he had. Give me back my ewe lamb, and let me look the folk in the face again, for the love of God!"

He was standing before her in his night shirt all the time, not knowing what to say, feeling dizzy and confused.

Now he took her by the arm, and led her to the door.

"One moment, Mrs. Peck. Sit down and wait while I dress. I shall not be long. Don't say another word till I come."

He dressed with feverish haste, though his fingers were trembling, and he could not find the buttons. Then, after ten minutes or so, he came into the sitting-room, and, pouring out a glass of spirits, made the poor old creature drink it down.

"Now, Mrs. Peck; let us try and get all our courage. I have not seen her—believe me, my poor woman—since Tuesday evening."

"She came home on Tuesday evening at ten o'clock."

"Yes; she was to have come and told me something yesterday."

"She went out at half-past nine yesterday morning, and she never came back. I waited for her till ten last night, and, thinking she was with you, I went sound asleep, and didn't wake till this morning at six. And then I looked in her room, for the door was open, and she wasn't there. And the workus is all I've got to look to."

Venn's hands were trembling now, and his face white.

"She cried when she left me on Tuesday. She had her secret then. Mrs. Peck, remember, my little girl is good. She has done no harm—she *can* do nothing wrong. Fool that I was, when she wanted to tell me her secret, and I would not hear it. Where is she? But she is a good girl. Only wait—wait—wait—we shall see."

He spoke hopefully, but his heart fell.

Nothing wrong? Whence, then, those tears? Why had she been so sad for two or three weeks? Why had she harped upon her secret? And yet, what could she do? Always with him—whose acquaintance could she make?

"You're telling me gospel truth, sir?" cried his landress. "Swear it—swear it on the Bible."

"I don't know where my Bible is—the Lord forgive me!" he answered. "Do not let us be miserable," he went on, with an attempt at cheerfulness. "I expect she is stopping out with some friends."

"She has no friends. Never a soul has she ever spoken to, for twelve years—but you and me, and Miss Venn."

"Perhaps she is up there. I will go and see."

He tried to cheer up the old woman; invented a thousand different ways in which the girl might have been obliged to pass the night away from home; and then, because his own heart was racked and tortured, he hurried off to his sister's.

Sukey he met on her way to early service—that at half-past seven. It was one of the peculiarities of that young lady to find a considerable amount of enjoyment in these extra-parochial, so to speak, and extraordinary forms of religion.

"Hartley?—you, of all men in the world, at half-past seven!"

"Sukey, have you got Lollie with you?"

"Laura? I haven't seen her for six weeks—not since she had tea with me. But, Hartley, what is the matter?"

He caught hold of the railing which ran round the garden of the square, and almost fell. For it was his one hope; and his head swam.

"God help us all!" he murmured—"my little girl is lost."

What could she say?

"She left me on Tuesday evening. She told me that yesterday I should learn a secret which would please me more than anything—she even offered to tell it me. She was excited and nervous when she said good night to me; and yesterday evening she never went home at all. Sukey, don't speak to me—don't say anything, because I cannot bear it. Come and ask in a day or two. Sukey, you believe in prayer. Go into church, and pray as you never prayed before. Throw all your heart into your prayers for the child. Pray for her purity—

pray for her restoration—pray for my forgiveness; or—no—why do men always want to push themselves to the front?—pray, Sukey, that my ill-training may bear no ill fruit. And yet, God knows, I meant it all for the best."

He turned away and left her. She, poor woman, with the tears in her eyes, went back to her own room; and there, not in the artificial church, with the cold and perfunctory service, but by her own bedside, knelt and prayed for her brother and his darling, while sobs choked her utterance, and the tears coursed down her cheeks.

Hartley returned to his chamber, and found Mrs. Peck still there. The effect of the excitement upon her was that she was actually cleaning things. He tried to cheer her up, and then went to the police-station, where they heard what he had to say, made notes, looked wise, and promised great things, after he had given an exact description of her dress and appearance.

What next?

"Had she any friends?"

"None," Mrs. Peck had replied.

He knew of an acquaintance, at least; though Mrs. Peck had never heard of her. There was a certain Miss Blanche Elmsley, third-rate actress, figurante, anything, attached to the fortunes of Drury Lane Theatre. Her papa, who rejoiced in the name of Crump, was the proprietor of a second-hand furniture shop in Gray's Inn-road. He had not much furniture, but he sold anything, bought anything; and was not too proud to do odd jobs at the rate of a shilling an hour. Moreover, Mr. George Augustus Frederick Crump, christened after one of the late lamented Royal Princes, was a most respectable man, and highly esteemed in his quartier. He was the worshipful Master of a Lodge of Ancient Druids, and accustomed to take the vice-chair at a weekly harmonic meeting. His daughter, Mary, was a child to whom Venn, who knew everybody, had been accustomed to make little presents, years before. She was about five or six years older than Laura. When she grew up to woman's estate she obtained—chiefly through Venn's interest—a post as assistant in the refreshment department of one of the leading railway stations. Then he lost sight of her altogether till a twelvemonth or so later, when Lollie came to him one night with a piteous tale: how that poor Mary, for some reason unknown to her, had been turned

from her father's door, and was penniless and houseless. Then Hartley Venn—a Samaritan by legitimate descent, as much as the present Sheikh, Yakoob Shellaby—went to the rescue; the end being that he saw the poor girl through a good deal of trouble, and by dint of wonderful self-sacrifice, living on herbs and cold water for a quarter or so, managed to put things straight for her.

The Samaritan, you know very well, not only bound up the wounds which the wicked robbers had made, but poured in oil. Not content with that, he lifted the poor man, all bleeding as he was, upon his own beast, doubtless covered with a new and highly respectable saddle-cloth, trudging alongside—and those roads of Palestine, unless it was the Roman road, were none of the best, mind you—until he came to the nearest Khan, where he bargained with the landlord for a small sum. The Priest and the Levite, I make no doubt, would have done exactly the same, but for the look of the thing. It would seem too disreputable for persons of their respectability to be seen tramping along the road with a bleeding man upon their private ass, bedabbling the saddle-cloth. Yet make no doubt that their hearts were deeply touched, and I think I can fancy the Priest making a very fine point of it, in his way, next Sabbath day's discourse. It would turn on the duty of being Prepared.

Mary's father was the priest. So, with a pang at his heart and an oath on his lips, he told the girl to go, and never again to darken his doors.

She went. His respectability was saved. Close by, she met little Lollie on her way home. She knew her by sight, and told her some of the story. The rest we know.

Venn was her Samaritan.

Mary was sitting in her second floor back, making a dress for the baby, and crooning a tune in as simple freshness of heart as if she had never sinned at all. The blessed prerogative of maternity is to heal, at least for the time, all wounds. Besides, we can't be always crying over past sins. When the sun shines, the birds will sing. In her child, Polly had forgotten her troubles. Man leaves father and mother, and cleaves to his wife. Woman leaves father and mother, husband and lover, and forgets them all, and cleaves to her little ones.

Venn came in, hurried and excited.

"Where is Lollie?" he asked. "Have you seen Lollie?"

"Your little girl, Mr. Venn? Oh, what has come to her?"

Hartley's last slender reed of hope was broken. He sat down, and dropped his face in his hands. Then he looked round, blankly.

"If I could find him!" he groaned—"if I could find him! By G—d!—if I should but for once come across him somewhere!"

Polly understood in a moment.

"Don't say that, Mr. Venn. Don't tell me that Lollie, of all girls in the world—"

"Hush! Perhaps—perhaps— Mary, you know nothing of it?"

"God forgive me!" sobbed Mary. "Mr. Venn, I'd rather my little boy died in my arms; and then, Heaven knows, I'd lie down and die myself. Lollie! Oh, it was she who brought me to you in all my trouble. What should I have been without her? Where should I be now?"

"I must go," said Venn, rising abruptly. "Think of her, my girl. If you can devise any plan for looking after her, tell me. If you can think of anybody or anything—remember that every penny I have in the world I will spend to bring her back. Where can I look for her—where?"

He spread out his hands in his distress, and walked backwards and forwards in the little room.

"Don't be angry with me, Mr. Venn, at what I'm going to say. She must have gone off with some one. No doubt he promised to marry her. They all do. And if he does it, you will have her back in a day or two, with her husband, asking for your forgiveness. And if he doesn't, why, then—why then, Mr. Venn, don't let us think of it. But if she comes back, all wretched and tearful, will you forgive her, Mr. Venn—will you forgive her?"

"Forgive her? Is there anything my child could do that I would not forgive? You don't understand, Mary. She is my life. I have no thought but for her. In all these years, while she has been growing up beside me, every hour in my day seemed to belong to the child. What could I not do for her? Let her come back, and all shall be as it was before. But, no. That, at least, cannot be. The fruit of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, prevents that. Eden is shut out from us. But let her come back, and we may be but as another Adam and Eve, making aprons to hide the memories of our souls."

"Perhaps they were happy," said Mary the mother; "because they had children."

"I don't know," said Venn. "History says very little about it. Perhaps they were. Let us hope so. Good-bye, girl."

She took his hand, and, out of her gratitude and sympathy, raised it to her lips. The action had all the grace of a duchess, though it was but in a poorly furnished lodging—bed-room, sitting-room, and all in one—and the performer was only a ballet girl.

From her, Venn went to Lynn's rooms. These were at the top of an endless staircase in the Temple.

"You, Venn!" said Lynn, opening the door. "I thought it was the long-expected case. What has brought you here at this time of day?"

Venn sat down, and answered nothing. After a minute or so, which his thoughts turned into half an hour, he got up again.

"I must go," he said. "I've stayed here too long."

He put on his hat, and made for the door, with staggering step. Then Lynn caught him by the arm, and forced him into an arm-chair.

"For God's sake, Venn, what is the matter?"

Hartley looked at him in a dazed way. Then he fairly fainted, falling forwards. It was two o'clock, and he had eaten nothing all day. Lynn lifted him, and laid him on the sofa—pouring water on his forehead, which was burning. Presently he recovered a little, and sat up.

"Do you remember our idle talk last night, Lynn?"

"Perfectly. What about it?"

"Do you remember what we said about women?"

"What about it?"

Venn was silent again. Then he went on, with a deep, harsh voice—

"I found a little child. In my loneliness, and the despair that followed all my ruined hopes, I made her the one joy and comfort of my life."

"Laura?"

"I brought her up myself, and taught her all that I thought the child should know. I forgot one thing."

"Venn, what has happened?"

"I forgot religion. All the rules of right and wrong do not come by observation. The habit of fearing God comes by teaching. But I loved her, Lynn—I loved her.

She looked to me as a kind of elder brother; but I—I loved her not as a little sister. I looked for a time when she should be old enough to hear the love story of a man nearly twenty years her senior. I thought to win her heart, and not her gratitude. So I was content to wait. Her only joy in life was to come to me. But I forgot that there are wolves abroad. If ever I meet the man— But it is idle threatening. Old friend of twenty years, if I thought you had done this thing, I would strangle you as you stand there."

"But Venn—Venn, what is it?"

"I was reading a story in a novel the other day—a French novel. There was a Laura in it, and a man: a foolish sort of story. She left him one evening, hanging upon his neck, vowing a thousand loves, showering kisses upon him. She said she was going to the seaside—to Dieppe—somewhere for a fortnight. She wrote to him a fortnight later, when he expected her back—told him in three lines that she had left him for ever, that she could never see him again, that she was to be married to some one else. Not a word, you see, of regret. Nothing left, no memory at all of the days they had spent together. A foolish story. I laughed when I read it.

"He, who was only a poor sort of loving fool, and believed that women could be true, sat down in his lonely room and cried. Then he wrote to a post-office where she might possibly go and ask for letters, and told her to be happy; that he forgave her; that if anything happened to her—any poverty, any distress—he was still her friend. I thought what an ass he was. Her name was Laura, too. That must have been why I read the story. Laura—Laura—a lover's name."

"In Heaven's name, Venn, what has happened?"

"Women, you see," Venn went on, in a hard, unnatural voice, "require positive teaching. You must say to them, do this, do that, and avoid something else. I forgot this. I treated the girl as if she had been a boy.

"Life, you will observe, is a series of unexpected retributions. For every mistake you make, down comes the Avenger. No quarter is given, and no warning. It seems hard when you first begin to understand it, doesn't it?

"We have been accustomed to look at

the disappointments of life as so much capital—the occasion for saying clever things. Why, Jones makes fifty rhymes every time he fails, and I say fifty remarkable things. And you utter fifty oaths. Here is only another disappointment. We will have another brilliant Chorus next week. Life's disappointments are so many of a small kind, that when a big one comes—the biggest that can come—we really ought to be prepared.

"I loved her, Lynn, I loved her."

All the time he had been sitting on the sofa, talking in this incoherent way, with his eyes strained and his lips cracked. Then Lynn took him by the arm.

"Come back to Gray's Inn," he said.

"We will take a cab."

He led him down the stairs, and took him back to his own chambers. When they got there, the old woman, still waiting for them, rushed forward.

"Have you found her, sir? Have you found her?"

And then Venn sat down in his old easy-chair, and cried like a child.

"I think," he said, presently, recovering a little, "that I will go to bed. The Kings of Israel, whenever they experienced any little disappointment, used to do it, and turn their faces to the wall. Ahab, you remember, in that affair of his about the vineyard. I shall turn my face to the wall. When I was ill as a child I used, directly I got into bed, to fancy myself in a coach and four; and the relief was wonderful. Good-bye, Lynn, it's very kind of you; but—but—well, you can go away now."

"I shall stay," said Lynn, not liking the way in which he talked—"I shall stay all night, and sleep on the sofa."

Venn went to bed; and his friend, getting a steak sent up at six, sat quietly waiting and watching. At midnight, he stole into the bedroom. Venn was sleeping soundly, with his fair, smooth cheeks high up on the pillow. As Lynn bent over him, the lips of the sleeper parted; and, with that sweet, sad smile which was his greatest charm, he murmured, softly and tenderly—

"My little girl—kiss me again."

CHAPTER XX.

DO you know the coast of Normandy? It is a country that everybody thinks he knows well. We have all been to Dieppe; some even to Havre. Dear friends, that is

really not enough. What you do not know is the existence of a dozen little watering-places between Havre and Boulogne, all charming, all quiet, all entirely French. These secluded retreats are like the triangles in the sixth book of Euclid's immortal work—they are all similar and similarly situated. Where the sea runs in and makes a bay, where a river runs down and mingles the fresh with the salt, where the cliffs on either side stoop to the earth and disappear in space, there lies the little fishing town. What it must be like in winter, imagination vainly endeavours to realize; but in summer, between June and October, there are no pleasanter places for quiet folk to stay in. Right and left, the cliffs rise to a height of some hundreds of feet. You climb them in the morning after your coffee and brioche, and stride away in the fresh upland air, with the grass under your feet and the woods behind. As you go along, you see the girls milking the sleepy-eyed Norman cows, you salute the women going to market with their baskets, you listen to the lark, you watch the blue sea far away beyond, with perhaps a little fleet of fishing boats. Presently, you turn back, for the sun is getting hot. Then you go down to the shore and bathe. Augustine, the fat, the bunchy, the smiling, the rosy-fingered, brings you a maillot. Clad in this comfortable garb, and throwing a sheet about you, you trip down the boards which lead to the sea, and enjoy a feeling of superiority when you feel all eyes turned to behold you swimming out to sea. Family groups are bathing together beside you—father of family and circle of children, bobbing, with shrieks, up and down; next to them some ancient dame, of high Norman lineage and wondrous aspect, gravely bobbing, held by both hands by the Amphibious One, who spends his days in the water and never catches rheumatism. Everybody bobbing. Then you go back to breakfast. The table d'hôte might be better; but it is wholesome. Here you become acquainted with strange fish—conger eel, for instance; and you learn the taste of mussels. The claret might be a more generous wine; but it is light and sound. After your walk you may drink a bottle for breakfast.

Presently you stroll into the town and look around. Here is a fisherman's church. In the little chapel, as you go in, are the *ex voto* pictures—they mean countless tears and anxiety. Here is the ship tossed by the storm; here the ship entering the port;

here are the rags of a flag, the bits of an oar—all the little memorials of an escape from danger, aided by Our Lady of the Sea, influenced by the prayers of the faithful. Are we in the nineteenth century? So, too, the Roman sailor offered his *ex voto* to Venus Marina; while yonder priest, in stole, alb, and dalmatic, may stand for his predecessor of Brindisium two thousand years ago, who chaunted the service to his goddess in the self-same dress, and very likely in the self-same Gregorian. Verily, my readers, we take a long time to change.

There is a quay. Lazy sailors lie about and talk. There is a smell of soup in the air, curiously blending with the tar. Over the cobbled roads thunder the country carts with their bells. The diligence is preparing, with a tremendous clatter and bustle, to get under weigh; and where, in an English country town, would be dismal silence and sluggishness, is life, animation, activity.

At six you may dine—in fact, you must, if you want to dine at all. The dinner is the same as the breakfast. And after that you may go to the casino. Ah, the casino! It is the home of all dazzling pleasures. There is the theatre, with a stage the size of a dining-room table; then the ball-room, with a piano and violin for music—no better music can be found; and there are the young bloods of the place, panting for the fray, with waxed moustache, and patent leather boots, the Don Juans of a thousand harmless amourettes. For here, mark you, we have not the morals of Paris. And the young ladies. They are not pretty, the Norman girls, after our notions of beauty. Some of them are too big in the nose; some of them are flat-faced, some of them are inclined to be “hatchety.” But they are gracieuses. Say anything you will of the Frenchwomen, but tell me not that they are clumsy. Always graceful, always at ease, always artistic. I believe, speaking as a bachelor, and therefore as a fool, that a Frenchwoman is, above all, the woman one would emphatically never get tired of. Pretty faces pall, pretty little accomplishments are soon known by heart. A loving heart may be no prevention against that satiety which cometh at the end of sweet things. In love, as in cookery, one wants a little—eh? a very little—sauce piquante. Now, the Frenchwoman can give it you.

And at eleven o'clock you may go to bed; because if you sit up you will be the

only soul awake in all the town. They are all alike, as I said before. I have seen them all. The prettiest of them is Etretat, the sweetest of watering-places, with its little chalets perched on the hillsides, its perforated rocks, its sharp cliffs, and its gardens. But it is also the dearest. Reader of the middle class, sensible reader, who, like me, does not pretend to be a Milord, go not to Etretat to stay. Go rather to little Yport, close by, where the *établissement* is no bigger than a family pew, and where in a day you will be the friend of all the good people—chiefly connected with the cotton, or perhaps the cider, interests—who are staying there for the benefit of the sea breezes.

It was to Vieuxcamp that Philip took his bride. They arrived there the day after their marriage. Laura was too confused with the novelty of everything to be able to think. She was wild with excitement. This, then, was the world. How big it was! These were the people who spoke French. Why, the little children talked it better than she did, after all her lessons! Then, the Norman caps, and the cookery, and the strangeness of it all. I don't believe there is anything in the world—not even love's young dream, or love's first kiss, or the first taste of canvas-back, or the first oyster of the season, or the forbidden port, or a glass of real draught bitter after years abroad; or the sight of those you love, when you come home again; or the news that your play is accepted, or the first proof-sheet, or a legacy when you are sick with disappointment, or praise when you are dying with fatigue, or a laudatory review: there is not one of these delights—I forgot to mention twins, but not even that—which comes up to the first joy of seeing a foreign land, and that land France.

Lollie saw some English children at Dieppe the morning after they came.

“Oh, Philip,” she cried, “what a shame to bring those children here! Think of the happiness they will miss when they grow up.”

That, as the Yankees say, is so.

He brought her by diligence from Dieppe to Vieuxcamp, and they began the usual life of the place. He had taken the best rooms in the hotel, where they could sit and look at the sea. Laura had not seen it since she went with Sukey to Deal, eight years ago. In the morning, they bathed

together in the pleasant French fashion. In the hot daytime they stayed indoors, and read novels. In the evening, they went to the casino.

At the table d'hôte, Philip's wife was quite silent for three days. Then, to his utter amazement, she turned to her neighbour, a lively little Frenchwoman, who had addressed some remark to her, and answered her quite fluently, and in perfect French.

"Where did you learn it, my darling?"

"I learned it at home. Mr. Venn and I used to talk. But, somehow, I could not say a word at first. Now I begin."

And then the French ladies all made much of her, admiring the sweet innocence of her beauty, and that fair wealth of hair, which she wore loose and dishevelled at breakfast, and neatly bound up for dinner.

On the very first morning after their arrival, Philip found her, on coming in from a walk, writing a letter to Venn.

"That is right," he said. "Tell Mr. Venn where we are. He will want to know more than your little note told him. Write all you can, darling; but tell him you are happy. Are you happy, my own?"

She smiled contentedly, and went on writing. It was a long letter, and took a good half-hour to write, though her facile pen seemed to run glibly enough over the paper. When it was finished, she folded and placed it in an envelope.

"Now, let us go and post it," she cried, looking for her hat.

Phil looked at his watch. It was a quarter to eleven.

"Better let me go, dear," he said; "it only wants a quarter of an hour to breakfast. I shall be ten minutes, and you will be ready to go down then."

She gave him the letter, and he went out.

On the way, the landlady of the hotel gave him a letter from England, which he opened and read.

It was from MacIntyre.

"I thought it best not to take that note to Mr. V. It has been burned instead. If I were you, all things considered, I would not let her write to him. Questions will be asked. Things perfectly legal in Scotland may not be so in England. From what I have learned of Arthur, who is his friend, Mr. V. is a man capable of making himself very disagreeable. *Don't let her write.*

"A. MACI."

Philip read it with a sinking heart. This man seemed to stand between himself and every effort at well-doing. He had firmly steeled himself to letting Venn know what he had done, and taking any consequences that might befall him. The last orders he had given were that the note was to be taken to Gray's Inn; and now the letter was burned, and the poor girl's guardian would believe that she had run away from him. At the first shock, Philip felt sick with dismay and remorse. Then he began to think of himself. Should the new letter be sent? He strolled along the esplanade by the sea-shore, sat down, and looked at it. The envelope was not yet dry. He opened it, and took out the letter. Then he committed the first crime—unless the marriage was one—in his life. I mean the first thing which destroyed his own self-respect, and gave him a stronger Shove downhill—see the philosophical remarks in a previous chapter—than anything he had yet experienced. For he read the letter.

"MY DEAR MR. VENN—I do not know how to begin my letter. You have heard my secret now, because Philip sent on my letter. I was so sorry not to be able to come with it myself. When I saw you on Tuesday, I came determined to tell you all, in spite of Philip's prohibition; but you would not hear it. And now I wish you had, because then you would have come yourself, and been present at my marriage. Yes, I am really and truly married. I cannot understand it at all. I keep turning my wedding ring round and round my finger, and saying that I have done the very thing you wanted me to do. And then I feel that I was wrong in not telling you of it. Directly after the marriage we came over here—Philip and I, and are going to stay for another fortnight. I will tell you all about the place and the people when I see you. But it is all so strange to me, that I feel giddy thinking about it. And you will like Philip, I know you will; if only because he is kind to me and loves me. It is all through your kindness. I can never say or write what I feel towards you for it all. You will always be first in my thoughts. We are not very rich, I believe; but we have enough to live upon, and we are going to be happy. The old life has passed away, and all our pleasant days; but the new ones will be better, only you will have to come and see me now. I

think I shall be very happy as soon as I hear that you are satisfied and pleased with what I have done. Write at once, and tell me that you are, dear Mr. Venn, and then I shall dance and sing. Let me always be your little girl. I had to keep the secret for Philip's sake; but he always promised that as soon as we were married you should know everything.

"He is too good for me, too handsome, and too clever. Of course he is not so clever as you are. Nobody is. And I do not think he has ever written anything—at least, he has never told me of anything.

"Write to me at once, dear Mr. Venn, by the very first post that comes back. To-day is Saturday; I shall get your letter on Tuesday. Give my love to my grandmother. She will not miss me. And always believe me, dear Mr. Venn, your own affectionate and grateful little girl,

"LOLLIE DURNFORD."

Philip's handsome face grew ugly as he read the letter—ugly with the cloud of his negro blood. What business had his wife to write a letter so affectionate to another man? Jealousy sprang up, a full-blown weed, in his brain. What right had she to love another man? His nostrils dilated, his forehead contracted, his lips projected. These were symptoms that accompanied the awakening of his lower nature.

Two men passed him as he sat on the beach. Quoth one to the other, as they both looked in his face—

"C'est probablement un Anglais?"

And the other made reply—

"Je crois que c'est un mulâtre. Peut être de Martinique."

He heard them, and his blood boiled within him. The lower nature was in command now. He tore the letter into a thousand fragments, and threw them into the air.

Then he resolved to go back and tell a lie. At any cost—at the cost of honour, of self-respect—he would break off all connection with this man. His wife should not know him any longer, should not write to him a second time.

He strolled back, angry and ashamed, but resolved.

Lollie was waiting for him, dressed for breakfast. He kissed her cheek, and tried to persuade himself that he was acting for the best.

"And what did you say to Mr. Venn, darling?"

"I said that I was married, and happy, and eager to get his letter to tell me that he is pleased."

"Why did you not write to your grandmother, my dear?"

"Oh," she replied, lightly, "she will hear from Mr. Venn. And, besides, as she cannot read, what does it matter? You know, she never liked me at all; and only kept me with her, I believe, on account of Mr. Venn. I must have been a great trouble to her."

Caresses and kisses; and Philip, with the ease of his facile nature, put behind him his deceit and treachery to be thought of another day. After all, letters do miscarry sometimes.

The honeymoon, married men of some standing declare, is wont to be a dreary season, involving so much of self-sacrifice and concession that it is hardly worth the trouble of going through it. It has some compensations. Among these, to Philip, was the real pleasure of reading all the thoughts of a pure and simple-minded girl. When he was under the influence of this maidenly mind, his mind—Augean stable though it was—seemed cleansed and purified. The prompting to evil ceased. The innocence of his youth renewed itself, and seemed to take once more, with a brighter plumage, a heavenward flight—only while he was in her presence; and, as we have seen, a few words from his evil genius had power enough to make him worse than he was before. For the stream of Lollie's influence was a shallow one: it had depth enough to hide the accumulations of mud, but not enough to clear them away. Like the transformation scene in a theatre, for a brief five minutes all is bright, roseate, and brilliant. Before and after, the yellow splendour of the gaslight. With a lie hot upon his lips, with a new sin fresh upon his conscience, Philip yet felt happy with his wife. It is not impossible. The poor habitual criminals of the thieves' kitchen are happy in their way—boozing and smoking, though the policemen are gathering in pursuit, and they know their days of freedom are numbered.

"Tell me," said Philip, "did Mr. Venn never make love?"

"What a question!" she replied, laughing. "Mr. Venn, indeed! Why, he is as old—as old—No one ever made love to me except yourself. But take me down to

breakfast. Philip, when we go back to London, will your own relations be ashamed of me?"

"I have no relations, dear, except a cousin. If he is ashamed of you, I shall wring his neck. But he will be proud of you, as I am proud of my pretty wife. But for the present you must be content with your stupid husband. Can you?"

"Don't, Philip," said his wife. "And the bell has gone ten minutes."

And on the Sunday—next day—Lollie got a new experience of life.

It was after breakfast. They were strolling through the town. The bells were ringing in the great old church, so vast and splendid that it might have been a cathedral. And in one of the little streets, where there was a convent school, there was assembling a procession—all of girls, dressed in white, and of all ages and sizes, from the little toddler who had to be led, to the girl of twenty, gorgeous in her white muslins and her lace veil. As they stopped to look, the procession formed. At its head marched the toddler, supported by two a little taller than herself; and then, wedge fashion, the rest followed, the nuns, with their submissive, passionless faces, like the sheep of sacrifice, following after. And as they defiled into the street, they began to sing some simple French ditty—not more out of tune than could be expected from a choir of French country girls—and headed on to the church. Philip and Laura followed. The girls passed into the church. As the darkness of the long nave seemed to swallow them up, a strange yearning came over the girl.

"Philip, I should like to go into the church."

"Do, my dear, if you like. I shall go and stroll along the beach. You can go in and see the ceremony, whatever it is, and then come back to the hotel."

She walked hesitatingly into the church. A man with a cocked hat and a pike in his hand, beckoned her, and gave her a seat. She sat down and looked on. A tall altar, garnished with flowers and lights, men with coloured robes, boys with incense, and an organ pealing. In all her life of eighteen years, she had never been inside a church: in all her education, there had been no word of religion. Now, like another sense, the religious principle awakened in her; and she knew that she was, for the first time, worshipping God.

When the people knelt, she knelt, wondering. When they stood, she stood, wondering. Always, the organ pealed and rolled among the rafters in the roof, and the voices of the singers echoed in her ears, and the deep bass of the priest sounded like some mysterious incantation. It was so grand, so sweet, this gathering of the folk with one common object. Her heart went up with the prayers of the church, though she knew nothing of what they meant. Lines from poetry crossed her brain: words from some authors she had read. The Madonna and the Child looked on her smiling: the effigy of our Saviour seemed to have its eyes, full of tenderness and pity, upon her. When next she knelt, the tears poured through her fingers.

The service ended. All went away except Laura. She alone sat silent and thinking.

"Madame would like to see the church?" asked the beadle.

She shook her head.

"Let me sit a little longer," she said, putting a franc into that too sensitive palm.

"Madame is right. It is cool in here." And left her.

She was trying to work it all out. She had discovered it at last, the secret which Venn's carelessness had kept from her. She knew the grave defect of her education: she had found the religious sense.

She rose at last, refreshed as one who, suffering from some unknown disease, suddenly feels the vigour of his manhood return. And when she rejoined her husband, there shone upon her face a radiance as of one who has had a great and splendid vision.

For the child had wandered by accident into the Fold.

HER MAJESTY'S BOARD OF CUSTOMS

AND

THE AUTHOR OF

"WRITTEN WITH A PURPOSE."

WE have received a communication from H.M.'s Board of Customs, formally acquainting us with the fact that an inquiry into the charges brought in our pages against the Liverpool Custom House officials has been held in Liverpool. It is "the Board's conviction that our sense of what is due to

the character of our journal, and of the officers of Customs at Liverpool, will point out to us the propriety of publishing the whole" of their report on the case. Accordingly we do so :—

Copy of an Order of the Board of Customs, dated 7th February, 1873.

The Board of Customs have had before them the evidence adduced at the investigation which has been held by Mr. Ogilvie, Surveyor-General, in pursuance of their directions, in consequence of the statements reflecting upon the character of the officers of Customs at Liverpool, contained in an article entitled "Written with a Purpose, by an American," and published in the periodical called *ONCE A WEEK*, on the 9th November last; and also in a letter by Mr. Dent, the author of the article referred to, to the editor of the periodical, and printed in the number published on the 4th January.

In the article in question reference is made to the grievance arising from the gratuity system, which is stated to be prevalent from one end of this country to the other; and the article then proceeds as follows:—

"My experience of the gratuity system dates from the time when I had been in England about thirty seconds. The moment I disembarked at Liverpool, I walked forward into the large cattle-pen where passengers' trunks and luggage are supposed to be subjected to the scrutiny of the Custom House officials. I say 'supposed to be,' because, in point of fact, they are, as a rule, only subjected to such scrutiny in the event of their owner's neglecting to espouse the gratuity system by 'tipping' half-a-crown—or it may be a few pence—to the person whose duty it is to examine his luggage. I was asked if I had any cigars or tobacco in my trunks. I replied in the negative, and was proceeding to unlock and unstrap them one after another for the official's inspection, when I received from him a gentle, insinuating nudge on the shoulder. I looked up, and then, for the first time in my life, I saw the face of a veritable Jerry Sneak. He placed his knuckles up to his forehead, and then, with a sort of wheezy grunt, commenced rapidly moving his eyes from my breast to the ground, and *vice versa*—he had not sufficient manhood to look as high as my face. I had never been subjected to anything of this kind before, but I had read of it; and there was no misunderstanding his pitiful, hangdog gestures. If ever actions spoke louder than words could possibly have done, they did on this occasion. With a smile of unconcealed contempt, I slipped half-a-crown into his apparently unconscious hand, and for that sum purchased the privilege of relocking my trunks without any further inspection, and going on my way rejoicing. For all he knew to the contrary, I might have a hundredweight of choice Virginia in those

trunks. He neither knew nor cared what was in them. He had his *douceur*, and had done his duty to his country, like a pious and faithful official."

In the letter published on the 4th January, after stating that the "Liverpool officials have acquired an unenviable notoriety as participators in the infamous gratuity system," Mr. Dent states:—

"Had I thought proper to do so, I might have gone much more minutely into details, and written with a much greater degree of acrimony than I did. I might have alluded to more than one friend and acquaintance of mine who has been put to delay and inconvenience in consequence of his determination not to yield to the tacit importunities of the Custom House servants. I have only landed at the port of Liverpool twice in my life; but on both occasions have I been compelled to choose between espousing the gratuity system, and being kept cooling my heels in the Custom House shed for half an hour or more." . . . "Far be it from me to assert that there are no honest men among the Liverpool Custom House officials. For all I know there may be *one*, or even *two*. But here I beg to record my sincere conviction, a conviction in which nine out of every ten American travellers in England will fully bear me out, that such officials are as few as were righteous men in the Cities of the Plain."

The assertions and charges contained in the foregoing extracts may be shortly stated to be—

1. That the baggage of passengers arriving at Liverpool is only subjected to examination in the event of the owners neglecting to give gratuities to the officers of Customs, involving a general charge of corruption against all the officers of Customs at that port whose duty it is to examine the baggage of passengers arriving from abroad.

2. That passengers have been put to delay and inconvenience in consequence of their determination not to yield to the tacit importunities of the Custom House servants.

3. A specific charge that an officer of Customs, on the occasion of Mr. Dent's arriving in Liverpool from America, solicited, by actions which if possible spoke louder than words, a gratuity; and on receiving it passed his (Mr. Dent's) baggage without examination.

In support of this last charge the following evidence was given by Mr. Dent at the investigation:—

"I am the author of the paper published in the number of *ONCE A WEEK*, dated November 9, 1872, called 'Written with a Purpose.' When I arrived in England the first time, I had no experience of the venality of the Customs. The arrival referred to in my article was on the 11th of June last, by the *City of Paris*, from New York. I do

not know the precise spot in Liverpool where I landed. My baggage was brought up for examination on shore about noon. . . . I did not open my baggage—it was unstrapped, but not opened. I undid the straps and unlocked the trunks as soon as I landed. I, as soon as I had done this, stepped across to an official, gave him money, and asked him to examine my baggage. I did not give him the money to avoid an examination. I can't be positive it was a half-crown (as I mentioned in my article) I gave; but I gave him money. He said, when asked to come, 'Yes, yes.' He hesitated, because he was engaged with other baggage. He came in a minute or two, and then I gave him the money. He did not ask me for money, but I had some conversation, in which I conveyed the idea I would remunerate him. I don't recollect the precise words. The offer came from me in the first instance. He said, while he was marking the baggage, 'No cigars or tobacco, I suppose?' I said, 'No.' He looked at me in a manner which led me to believe if I did not remunerate him he would keep me there some time. He examined my luggage out of its turn."

With reference to the assertion that baggage is only subjected to examination in the event of the owners neglecting to give gratuities to the officers of Customs, and the general charge of corruption, the evidence of Mr. Dent is as follows:—

"The reasons and grounds I had for making the charges against the Liverpool officials were, in the first place, having always heard that venality prevailed among them, and having been informed by friends of innumerable instances when they had passed their baggage without examination, and in some cases had, I am sorry to say, been guilty of smuggling; and having seen the charge made by other literary men. One gentleman on board the *City of Paris* had several boxes of cigars. . . . those cigars he told me he had brought from America, to use on a continental tour. He stated that he was in the habit of coming constantly to Europe, that he invariably brought cigars enough to last him during his trip, and that he never paid a cent. of duty in his life; that he intended to do as he had always done—tip the official who examined his luggage. . . . I saw him confer for a moment with an official. The official accompanied him into a room. They were absent about a minute. They emerged from the room, and came to where the gentleman's baggage was. The official marked his boxes. The boxes were never opened. The gentleman then left the Custom House. I don't know this gentleman's name; and if I did I should not tell you, as he is not in the jurisdiction of this Court. I don't know his name; but he was a first-class cabin passenger, whom I was friendly with all the voyage. . . . I did not see the cigars packed into his baggage.

"I also saw, I believe, a steerage passenger take an official apart, and saw their hands join together, and the official put his in his pocket. The passenger's baggage, which was open, was then passed with a very cursory, if any, examination. I was at some distance, and don't know if the official asked for anything. From my own experience I can give no other cases. . . . At the time of my first arrival in England, I did not give any gratuity to Customs officials."

On the whole of the officers who were employed on the duty of examining baggage landed from the *City of Paris* on the day of Mr. Dent's arrival being paraded before him, he states—

"Amongst the men produced I do not recognize the man to whom I gave money on the 11th June, 1872, when my baggage was examined."

After taking the evidence of Mr. Dent, the following witnesses were called and examined by the Surveyor-General, viz:—

Mr. J. Fox, examining officer in charge of the baggage warehouse on the 11th June last; Mr. H. L. Sherlock and Mr. T. B. Sherlock, baggage agents to the Inman line of steamers; Mr. John Wallace, superintendent of the Customs department, Cunard line of steamers; Mr. John Hansell, baggage agent of the Allan Steamship Company.

Mr. Fox, examining officer of Customs, explained the system followed in examining baggage, and in the course of his evidence states:—

"The practice is not to examine any luggage until it is all landed, except in an urgent case, for a passenger to catch a train, or other important business, when, on application to the examining officer, it would be examined. A boatman is not allowed to do it on his own responsibility. The rule is for the boatmen to proceed with the baggage in regular order, under our inspection. The examining officers walk up and down during the examination. . . . I have no recollection of any application being made on the 11th June by any persons to have their baggage examined specially. I did not see any passenger give a gratuity to any of the men on that day. I have never seen any money so given to any of the officers."

Mr. H. L. Sherlock, baggage agent to the Inman line, states:—

"I never experience any difficulty in the examination of baggage, and I have never had complaints from passengers about delay; on the contrary, I have always received civility and courtesy from the officers of Customs. I give no gratuities to the officers. I have been asked by American gentlemen if such was the practice. I always said 'No,' and discountenance it; and invariably told them the officers would be liable to dismissal. I never saw baggage passed without the examining officer telling the inferior officers what to examine and pass. No officer examines baggage without the knowledge of the superior officer, and his instructions. I have never had any impediments thrown in my way in the examination of baggage on account of not giving gratuities. The officers have always been ready and willing. I have a great number of American clients—all the first men in America, I flatter myself. I have never heard any of my American clients express a belief that the officers of Customs would pass baggage without exami-

nation if they received gratuities. My observations apply to the inferior as well as the superior officers."

Mr. T. B. Sherlock, baggage agent to the Inman line, states:—

"I never knew of gratuities being given to Customs officers for examining baggage. I have never experienced any difficulty or delay, and find the officers most willing. I have never heard complaints of delay from people in consequence of not giving gratuities. I have never seen baggage delivered to passengers without its being opened and examined. I have never known a case of a gratuity being given to a Customs officer for any purpose."

Mr. J. Wallace, superintendent of the Customs department of the Cunard line, states:—

"I have never had any difficulty in getting baggage examined by the Customs officers, quite the reverse. . . . I have never heard any complaints of delay in the examination of baggage from passengers whose luggage is examined ashore. . . . Every facility in case of necessity is given by the Customs officers; but the examining officer is always consulted by the inferior officers before such facility is given. I have never seen baggage passed without examination by the officers. I am not aware that gratuities are given to the officers; and such a system certainly does not exist. I knew some time ago of one or two cases where passengers offered half-a-crown or so to subordinate officers, who refused to receive the money. My experience is of over seven years."

Mr. Hansell, baggage agent of the Allan line, states:—

"I am in the employ of the Allan Steamship Company, and my business is to attend to the Customs business of the firm, including the landing, &c., of baggage. . . . I never have any difficulty in getting the baggage examined, nor have I heard passengers complain of delay—at least, not of any that it was possible to avoid."

"I have never in any case seen the passengers give the officers money, and I never heard of such a practice. I have never seen passengers offer money to Customs officers. The subordinate officers examine passengers' baggage out of turn on application; but not without the sanction and knowledge of the examining officer, who satisfies himself of the necessity for the indulgence. I never saw baggage passed without examination. The examining officers are always present, and keep a constant watch over the subordinate officers. My experience is about seven years."

The Surveyor-General appointed to conduct the investigation has made a report to the Board, from which it appears that the evidence of Mr. Fox and Mr. H. L. Sherlock was given in the presence of Mr. Dent, who was then, at his own urgent request, allowed to retire from the investigation. It further appears that, before Mr. Sherlock was examined, Mr. Dent asked whether he

might cross-question the witness, and was informed that he was at full liberty to do so; but that, notwithstanding this permission, after hearing the evidence he declined to ask Mr. Sherlock any questions. The Board are also informed that before Mr. Dent left Liverpool he tendered his thanks to the Surveyor-General for the courtesy that had been shown to him, and expressed himself quite satisfied with the fairness with which the inquiry had been conducted.

The Board, after a full and careful consideration of the whole case, are satisfied that the assertion in the article of the 9th November last, that baggage, "as a rule, is only subjected to scrutiny in the event of the owners neglecting to espouse the gratuity system," has been made without any foundation on fact, and that the imputation against the integrity of the officers of Customs at Liverpool is altogether undeserved. The weight of evidence on these points clearly tends to prove that no delivery of baggage takes place without the cognizance of the superior officer in charge of the baggage warehouse, nor until a proper examination of the packages has been made. The two cases specially referred to by Mr. Dent in his evidence, with the view of proving that the delivery of packages without examination may be secured by "tipping" the officers, are founded partly upon hearsay and partly upon surmise, and cannot therefore be accepted as any proof that a gratuity was even offered, much less that it was accepted, in either case.

As regards the assertion that passengers have been put to delay and inconvenience in consequence of their determination not to yield to the tacit importunities of the Custom House servants, the Board are satisfied that any delay that the passengers may experience in the delivery of their baggage is not due to the cause alleged by Mr. Dent, but that it is occasioned by the time necessarily occupied in transferring the packages from the importing ship into the baggage warehouse, arranging the packages therein for inspection, and in removing them from the warehouse after being examined. The Customs department is in no way responsible for the manner in which these arrangements are carried out, the work being performed by persons unconnected with the department. The only duty the officers of Customs have to perform is to *examine* the baggage with as little inconvenience to the owners as

is consistent with a due discharge of their duty to the Crown.

It only remains for the Board to deal with the specific charge brought forward by Mr. Dent—viz., that on the occasion of his arrival from America on the 11th June last, an officer of Customs, by actions which, if possible, spoke louder than words, *solicited a gratuity*, and on receiving it passed his baggage without examination. The evidence given by Mr. Dent himself is entirely inconsistent with the truth of this accusation, as—without taking into consideration the discrepancy as to the time when the money is alleged to have been given—he states distinctly that the officer who passed his baggage “did not ask for money, but I had some conversation in which I conveyed the idea I would remunerate him. I don’t recollect the precise words. *The offer came from me.*” The Board observe that Mr. Dent did not identify the recipient of his money amongst the thirteen officers who alone were employed, on 11th June last, to examine the baggage by the *City of Paris*, when those officers were paraded before him on the 30th ultimo.

On review of the whole case, the Board consider that they would fail in their duty to their officers at Liverpool, whose integrity has been so wantonly impugned on this occasion, if they did not record their conviction that the evidence adduced has failed to afford any foundation for the accusation that has been brought against them.

As we wish to be perfectly fair towards her Majesty’s Commissioners, we publish the above report in extenso. At the same time, we must say that we are unable to concur in their opinion as to the conclusiveness of the evidence in vindication of the integrity of the subordinate officers of Customs at Liverpool. It seems to us that the negative evidence of four or five persons, or even of ten thousand persons, to the effect that they never saw gratuities given, cannot be permitted to prevail against the positive evidence of our contributor, who brings forward three specific cases which have come under his own personal observation, and do not rest, as the report most unfairly states, upon mere hearsay or surmise. If a man be detected in the act of cutting a throat, the court before which he is tried will scarcely regard it as conclusive evidence of his innocence that several other persons did

not happen to be present on the occasion, and see the crime committed. If prisoners were acquitted upon such evidence—which is, of course, no evidence at all—it would be impossible to convict a criminal of any offence whatever; since it stands to reason that, out of the many millions of persons who make up the earth’s population, some few must be absent from the commission of every offence. It is as who should say, the Pyramids of Egypt do not exist. It is true that innumerable writers have given their testimony to the contrary, and one gentleman has positively sworn that he has seen them. But what then? Smith and Jones have sworn that they never saw them—therefore, they do not exist.

The report of the Commissioners is an *ex parte* statement, and has the value generally attaching to one-sided statements. There is a reply to the Commissioners’ report. We have not space for it this week. We shall print it in our next issue.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—V.

THREE NIGHTS IN A FORSAKEN CLAIM.

(Concluded.)

TO make myself as comfortable as possible, and to dispel the miserable, lonely feeling that *would* keep stealing over me as darkness set in, I made a good, bright, cheerful fire, which lighted up my prison; then I made some tea, and, rolling myself in my blanket, lay down, and being tired by having had no sleep the night before, and with the anxiety and excitement, soon fell into a deep, sound sleep.

It must have been some hours afterwards that I awoke, feeling cold and wet. My fire, which I had put on the mound of earth I had made, had burned low, and was almost gone out, so that I was in darkness. Stretching out my hand, with the intention of throwing some wood, which I had placed all ready before I lay down, on the fire, I put it into a pool of water up to the wrist. At first I thought I had put my hand into a hole, which was filled with water by the rain; but on getting up to feed the fire, I felt the whole floor was covered about two or three inches deep with water. Suddenly, the thought flashed across my brain that the creek had swollen so much as to be finding its way into the hole. The idea gave me

such a start that I could hear the pulses of my heart beating.

What a terrible death was before me if this was the case! For a moment, I pictured to myself the water gaining inch by inch until I was floated off my legs, and I fancied myself swimming round and round the hole, like a mouse in a basinful of water, growing weaker and weaker, until at last, exhausted, I let my head sink below the water, never to rise again—probably never to be seen again by mortal eyes. The thought paralyzed me for a few moments. Then I heaped wood on the little fire there was, and soon got enough flame to show me a stream of water, small as yet, trickling down the side of the hole. There was no doubt of it—the creek, or some other stream, had found its way into the hole, and would soon fill it.

What could I do? Must I be drowned in this miserable way, without even a struggle for life? Certainly, the rain might stop before enough water flowed in to drown me; but a very few short hours would decide that; and meantime the stream steadily increased, until at last it became a small waterfall, not running down the sides, but leaping boldly down, as if eager to seize on its prey. By the time daylight appeared, I was up to my knees in water, and it was gaining faster than ever. Of course the fire had gone out some time before this, so that I had been left in complete darkness; and you cannot imagine the terrible misery I endured during that time, listening to the falling water with the same dismayed interest with which the condemned criminal listens to the sickening sound of the hammer preparing the scaffold on which he is doomed to die a revolting death on the morrow.

The light at first seemed only to show me more than ever the utter hopelessness of my position. The water was now pouring in, and filling the hole more rapidly than ever, and a very short time would suffice to do so now. I gave up all hope of being saved now; and taking an old letter from my pocket, wrote a few words on it, telling how I was situated, and where; then, putting it into my quart pot, I tied a piece of wood over the mouth with a strip of my shirt, and threw it away, hoping that it would float out at the top of the hole, and perhaps be picked up some time or other.

And then, like lightning, it flashed across

my mind, why not float out myself? If the quart pot could do so, why should not I? With tremulous haste, I got hold of two or three of the largest pieces of wood which floated about beside me, and bound them together as well as I could with what little was left of my shirt. Still, I had not enough to float me; and by this time the water was breast high, and in a few minutes would take me off my legs. Why had I not thought of all this sooner? Suddenly, the pole I had made attracted my attention, and I hurried to untie and add each piece to my raft. It was slow work; and by the time I had fastened three more pieces to it, I could no longer stand. Still, the raft was a great support, and I continued to increase it as much as possible. I felt now that I was saved—unless, indeed, my frail raft went to pieces, and of this there was every chance, for the water was now coming in with such force as to cause a sort of whirlpool, making my raft spin round and round like a top, and giving me as much as I could do to cling to it, without trying to make it more secure.

For about an hour I was bobbing about in this way—the water increasing faster and faster, but not too fast for me now. Then I became aware that it was darker; and, looking upwards, to my dismay I saw the roots of a large tree slowly being swept into the entrance of the hole, and threatening either to tumble in and crush me, or, worse still, to close up the mouth like a lid. I need not say how anxiously I watched its progress. Each time I looked it seemed nearer; but after a little I thought it had ceased to move, then I felt quite certain of it; and now the spinning motion of my raft was less, although the water flowed in more rapidly than ever. This I soon saw was owing to the large tree breaking the stream, and spreading the water more round the edges of the hole, so that the tree proved at last my best friend; in fact, had it not been for this, I very much doubt if I should have had strength sufficient to have held on to the raft, with the water falling on me in such quantities and with such force as it latterly would have done, if the tree had not intercepted and scattered it.

You may imagine, for I cannot describe, what I felt when I floated high enough to lay hold of the roots of the tree. I soon got on to the trunk, and gazed round. What a sight met my eyes! The whole flat was one

sheet of water, like a huge lake, and the creek was foaming and dashing along at a furious rate, bearing along with it large trees, and tossing them about and spinning them round as if they were no heavier than hurdle stakes.

I had no easy task to gain the smooth, quiet water which covered the flat, and had several narrow escapes of being crushed by dead logs whirling past. However, I got to dry land safely at last, and lost no time in making my way home. My people had not given themselves any trouble about me, thinking I was snug at one of our neighbours' stations, and therefore had no anxiety about me; so that had it not been for the heavy rain, I should most probably still have been in that ready-made grave.

REVIVAL OF THE HISTORICAL DRAMA.

TO the regret of all true lovers of the historical drama, the serious illness of Mr. Rignold has necessitated the temporary withdrawal from the boards of the Queen's Theatre of Colonel Richards's historical tragedy of "Cromwell"—an event to be regretted, not alone by *audi alteram partem* loving audiences, who desire to study or—as they may be Royalist or Republican—admire the characters of Charles and Cromwell, as they were respectively presented by Mr. Wills at the Lyceum, and Colonel Richards at the Queen's, but in the far higher interest of the dramatic art itself.

"Sir," said Dr. Johnson, to a young aspirant for literary fame, "above all things, clear your mind of cant."

It would have been well had the critics and quidnuncs of the last quarter of a century taken this advice to heart instead of adopting the professional argot and windbag technicalities even now common among them. Numerous have been the fine plays which have fretted but their little hour upon the stage through the priggishness of self-satisfied critics, and the tameness or the indolence of modern audiences, which prevent them from having any opinion of their own. From the time when, after much agitation, the patent theatres were deprived of their especial privileges, and the minor theatres were opened to the legitimate, the higher drama has, as a matter of fact, been on the decline. Diffusion in place of concentration has given weakness instead of

strength. The extension of railways, by offering greater facilities of transit to popular actors in London, has to a very great extent demoralized the system of circuits, the only really good training schools for actors. Another cause may have been the twisting or perversion of talent in the direction of easy adaptation, literary carpentry, and the meretricious attractions of spectacle and burlesque.

Like the hare, however, fashion in art runs in a circle—concentric, if you will: the one being completed, another course is to be run, and the old resumes its place again. So, the very prominent positions which the plays of "Charles I." and "Cromwell" have gained for themselves in public estimation give promise that the original dramatic author is about to hold his own again, in defiance of scene painter and the literary cobbler of the novels of popular writers, beneath the shadow of whose names they have for some time past surreptitiously flouished.

That Colonel Richards's play is a work of genius and sterling dramatic force, we would have ventured to affirm, even had it not received the careful criticism and high commendation of Thomas Carlyle, to whom it is dedicated, and who is himself the only real biographer of the Great Protector. Time was, when the pride of an actor was to train himself to the interpretation of the author's conception. The vicious—as far as art is concerned—fashion now is, to reverse this natural order of things, and for the dramatist, tailor-like, to fit his parts to the idiosyncrasies of particular actors. Nevertheless, although the fact that "Cromwell" was written years since precluded the possibility of the latter, and that it was, with respect to the time allowed for the thoroughly efficient study of the parts, and their homogeneous working, produced perhaps with insidious haste, it was a decided success; and undoubtedly, but for the accident of the illness to which we have alluded, would have had a long run at the theatre at which it was produced. Of the merits of the play as a literary work, teeming with vigorous dialogue and veritable dramatic situations, we cannot do better than quote the words of a veteran and accomplished dramatic critic on the eve of its representation:—

"As a dramatic scene, which would tell immensely in representation upon the stage,

we may point to the close of the third act, where Cromwell, after the execution of the King, visits Whitehall, where the body of Charles is lying in state, and boldly looks upon the dead face of his rival. The soliloquy, and the entire business of this scene, are dramatic and powerful in the extreme. It is the conception of a true poet, and a keen observer of human motives and feelings. Acted powerfully, the most indifferent audience would be moved by such a striking and original treatment of a most unconventional situation; while it could be easily managed so as not to become merely melodramatic or sensational. The prologue is excellent, introducing as it does some of the most characteristic leading traits in the chief personages of the play, and in preparing the audience for the tragic interest and gradual development of the later scenes. The reckless joviality of the Cavaliers is well introduced, and contrasts capitally with the exciting scene upon the battle-field, and the first victories of Cromwell, with which the first act winds up. The second act includes a most striking scene, where Cromwell's chief supporters denounce Charles, and insist upon his death; while Cromwell himself holds back a little, and appeals to Milton. But even the gentle poet agrees with the others, and the verdict of doom is pronounced against the King. One by one, the chief characters give their reasons for demanding the issue they are bent upon. Act the third is remarkable for some vigorous speeches and animated action. A passage spoken by Milton, in which the poet prognosticates the value of Cromwell's government to England, and the high place which will be accorded to him in the history of the nation, is most eloquent, having much of the fire and spirit we find in the best of the Elizabethan dramatists, and not altogether unworthy of Shakspeare himself. The speeches of Cromwell, and the scenes depicting the death of his favourite daughter Elizabeth, are very pathetic; and the manner in which the hero's strong purpose is seen to carry him triumphantly over every obstacle, brings the play to a most effective conclusion. The last speech of Cromwell, in which he speaks rejoicingly of the greatness and increasing power of his country, will find an echo in the heart of every Englishman who hears it. We commend this play as one worthy to live and to be incorporated in the bright roll of our national drama."

In conclusion, we may add that in its production the foregoing criticism was more than justified, and its acting capabilities proved by the admirable rendering of the principal characters by Messrs. Rignold, Ryder, and Miss Wallis.

AMATEUR MUSICAL SOCIETIES.

THE rapid and wide spread of musical knowledge throughout all ranks of society in this country is one of the most pleasing and healthful signs of the times. Of all the secondary agents of civilization—secondary, we mean, to moral and spiritual elevation—music must be admitted to occupy a high position, if not the highest. The circumstance that members of the musical profession may not always exemplify the highest type of civilization, does not lessen the abstract claims of music. It will, perhaps, compare with most other pursuits in this respect; but still there are circumstances connected with the life that are somewhat inimical to the quiet domestic existence which we are apt to consider the safest; and, besides this, the pursuit of anything for a living does, somehow, rob it greatly of its poetry and its soul—reducing it to the sordid level of any other business.

One of the most effectual agencies in the spread of musical knowledge is the amateur musical society. In our time we have been connected with a number, and have a knowledge of many more. It may be that these jottings may prove interesting, or even useful, to others similarly situated.

The most pretentious class is the Philharmonic Society, especially in London. Such societies are the chief regular purveyors of good music of all kinds, except entire operas. The conductor must be a musician of the highest standing. The band and chorus are of the best material, and thoroughly drilled. A good many of the chorus are amateurs; but the band is professional to the backbone, and many of its members are famous soloists with their several instruments. Oratorios, cantatas, symphonies, overtures, and miscellaneous operatic selections form the staple of the programmes, which are always interpreted by the aid of artistes of the first eminence. For a young artiste to gain a hearing at such concerts is a first step to fame. The audiences can hardly be described. They will represent,

more or less, the three millions or more of London, city and suburbs.

Then we have the Provincial Philharmonic, or Harmonic or Musical Society. This is generally something more than a mere concert-giving institution. It is a social feature of the town. To it must subscribe every one with any pretence to taste or culture—including, of course, many whose only claim is the pretence—and every one else who aspires to belong to the "upper classes." The dress places are, consequently, largely occupied by people decently dressed, who will yet talk all through a song, treat any more noisy performance as a well-devised cover for conversation, and enter or depart without scruple in the middle of a performance. The cheaper seats are chiefly occupied by people who actually seem to have come for the music alone. It is true you see most copies of the score when a work is performed. The conductor is probably a musician of mark, hailing from London, and running down merely for the concert and one rehearsal before it. The "grinding" is necessarily done by some sub-conductor or chorus-master, before the great man comes. The principal members of the band have similar engagements in London and the provinces, and lead the same nomadic existence as their chief. The band may also include some amateurs; and the chorus is mainly composed of amateurs, with a few semi-professional church singers as leaders. The performances by such societies of oratorio and instrumental works will sometimes reach quite to the metropolitan standard, constituting an admirable local school of music.

It is, however, to societies of more modest pretensions and more private character that the term "amateur musical society" more properly belongs; and, verily, their name is legion and their variety infinite. There is the ordinary private society, whose members subscribe and defray all expenses, providing generally their own music. They employ a professional man or a talented amateur, and give occasional concerts, admission being by invitation, or in aid of a charity. Their work is generally confined to choral music, and they seldom have more than pianoforte accompaniment; yet, with a clever conductor, and members admitted by test, they will sometimes excel the more pretentious public societies. The individual standard

of musical attainment being higher, they will *get through more* music, and perhaps do it better, than in the larger societies, where the sympathy and attention of the conductor is apt to be more devoted to the instruments than to the voices.

Then we have the church choir, whose weekly practice has gradually developed into a small choral society, under the preceptor or organist. Its members will do psalmody, anthems, glees, and even make a frantic attempt—more gallant than wise—at one of the easier masses or oratorios.

Lastly, there comes the most rudimentary of all—the "singing class," composed generally of very young folks, who have everything to learn. Hullah's system and the Tonic Sol-fa notation have greatly promoted the success of these, by facilitating the acquirement of sight-singing. A combination of the latter with the old notation, called the "union notation," may prove even more useful as a stepping-stone to learners. Such classes will learn simple harmonies with astonishing speed.

In our few remarks of a general nature, the reader will understand that the reference may be to any or all of these various societies, as the case may be, and as the cap may fit.

Let us look first at the most important functionary of all—viz., the conductor. He is the making or marring of the whole affair. Whether professional or amateur, he must be well up in the theory and practice of music, and incontestably superior to those he conducts; because he must not discuss nor hesitate, but direct and conduct with firmness, though not with undue peremptoriness. If he be really superior to his chorus, his decisions will not be questioned, though they may not always be accurate; if he be not so superior, then he ought not to be conductor at all. To him should be left the chief voice in selecting music, and in deciding what members shall sustain solo parts. The first point may sometimes be left to a vote; but the second he must decide upon his own responsibility. He must be the best judge, if not biassed in favour of his own private pupils. It need hardly be said he must be able to detect the slightest error in any part—otherwise a metronome would do as well; but if his chorus be crude, he must also have one of those universal voices capable of taking up any part which is faltering, and setting it safely on its legs again.

All these qualities are necessary to pull a chorus, with literal correctness of time and tune, through an ordinary choral work; but what qualities are required to give that polish, that spirit and expression of which every work of genius is capable?—in fact, to realize, even faintly, the grand ideas which inspired the composer, and of which his composition was then probably but an imperfect embodiment.

Such qualities cannot be described, and but few can possess them. Think of the rapture of singing "The Elijah" under Mendelssohn's own bâton! We must be content with much less than this, however. Imagination, and a lively fancy, he must possess. By means of these he will endeavour to put himself in the place of the composer before he can hope to realize the design of the music, or infuse it into his chorus.

Just reflect upon the kind of conductors some unfortunates are saddled with. There is one full of shrugs and grimaces, who waves a fancy bâton in a time no one can follow, but with the air of a Costa, who yet could no more teach a difficult chorus or stir up his singers to any emotion—save that of laughter—were it to save his life. Still more provoking is the tall, stiff automaton of a conductor, with no expression whatever in face or gesture, except an uneasy sense of all eyes being upon him. Such men are misplaced utterly. Without the quick eye omnipresent, the ready tact, and the gentlemanly, self-possessed bearing, the highest qualities of a more solid kind are of little avail. He should be entirely free from all business details and arrangements: it will be believed that he has already quite enough to take up all his attention, and tax all his patience and temper.

The next functionary in importance is the accompanist on the pianoforte. Even where a band is used at the concerts, the piano is yet essential for rehearsals. He or she must be a ready reader, a good timist, and ever ready to go over the same wearisome passage time after time for the benefit of stupid basses, tenors, altos, or trebles.

Then comes the secretary, who must possess, of course, business exactness and aptitude, and an infinite amount of tact, to avoid provoking the mutual jealousies of various members; and these amongst musical folks are proverbially great. He must sweeten, soften, and tone down the imperial mandates of the conductor to the whims and

vagaries of all, especially of the ladies. He must be well known to all, and subordinate all personal preferences to the interests of the society.

The first essential in a chorus is an equal balance of voices in the different parts. Authorities differ as to the relative numbers of treble, alto, tenor, and bass; and these numbers, again, depend very much on the strength of the individual voices.

One thing is certain, the treble and bass should be the strongest parts, while yet in most cases the alto is far too weak. Male altos are scarce, and rarely are they both sweet and effective. Boys' voices are effective—painfully so when they know the music, and get upon a note or two which they can let out; but in a year or two their voices break into the hobbledehoy state, and they are useless. Female altos, we think, are best of all; but they are not very numerous, and many girls with good alto or mezzo voices will persist in straining up to the soprano, under the absurd impression that alto is a secondary and less dignified part—an idea often encouraged by silly, vain mammas. Can anything be more ridiculous, whilst such vocalists as Madame Trebelli-Bettini and Madame Patey are listened to with delight everywhere, than to hear ladies screaming out an indifferent A or G, and neglecting the rich, mellow notes of their natural register?

If a society is desirous of attaining a high degree of excellence, some sort of musical test upon the admission of members is absolutely necessary. It is not enough that the proposer and seconder vouch for the candidate. We all know how little that is worth. It is bad enough to have a number of members who can hardly tell the key of a piece, or read the simplest air; but it is worse to have one or two incurably flat voices, or harsh and discordant voices, however true. These will utterly destroy all delicacy, and render a piano impossible. The conductors' banes are timid trebles, dragging basses, flat tenors, cracked altos. We all know the steady, regular, irrepressible alto, with the cracked voice and the green spectacles, who beats his own time—ignoring the conductor—and will persist in prolonging *his* note beyond all the others, like the wail of a Banshee. It is very hard to have to hurt any one's feelings, but such voices should be expunged without scruple. While speaking of individuals, I would like to ask who has had

the musical training of those young ladies who can play so brilliantly on the pianoforte, and sing a few songs fairly, but cannot tell the key in which a song is written—much less the modulations through which it passes—or start it correctly by the pitch-fork alone? It would be very interesting to know these superficial professors.

The selection of music is another very important matter, chiefly within the province of the conductor. There are several works constituting a sort of necessary curriculum for societies at first: "The Messiah," "The Creation," "Judas Maccabæus," perhaps "Elijah," or "St. Paul," a few well-known masses, a modern cantata or two, and a host of glees and madrigals, by Bishop, Horsley, &c. These are of course excellent, most excellent—'twere heresy to doubt it; but they do become a little monotonous to old hands. Surely musical men might unearth a number of works nearly as good, by the same old masters, though neglected; and so infuse some freshness and variety. A much more vital matter, however, is the manner in which every piece, even the simplest, is rendered.

A well-trained chorus or glee party may make the simplest thing perfectly ravishing by the exquisite delicacy of their performance of it. And here it is where the amateur falls so far behind the professional musician. The former is apt to be content with merely getting through without mistakes—the merest rudiment of a performance; while the latter will sing one song or glee over and over again—polishing, improving, perfecting it, until he is probably rather tired of it himself; but the audience, somehow, never tire of hearing the old, old thing, because they instinctively feel the charm of a perfect work of art—like every work of art, the result of patient labour. Amateurs can hardly expect to reach this standard; but they should constantly aim at it, and never rest content with anything less.

The arts of correct breathing and of producing the best quality of tone with the least effort belong more strictly to solo singing; but a careful conductor, by a few hints, may produce a wonderful improvement in the singing of his chorus in these respects; for they are of incalculable value to the general effect of the body of sound. Accuracy of time and tune, good tone, correct breathing and accent, light and

shade, may all be there; but above and beyond these there is a subtle, indescribable something—the soul of the music—which is too often missed. A careful study of the words—if the music was written *for* them—is very conducive to this end; though it is much neglected. We want, in fact, a *dramatic* rendering without dramatic gesture. To copy operatic gestures in the concert-room is absurd affectation; but a great deal may be done by the tones of the voice and the articulation of the words—a mixture of elocution with the singing. This is readily seen in such music as Elijah's declamations, or those in "Samson," as rendered by Santley; or in such choruses as the "Stone Him to Death," in "St. Paul," which a musical butcher was once caught practising to the time of his cleaver on the block—a most appropriate illustration. This dramatic rendering is also applicable to music of the softest, most plaintive, or most devotional character. The words should never be a mere vehicle for the music to be slurred over anyhow. If the music does not beautify and intensify the words, then one of the two is misplaced.

Choral music is a poor and tasteless thing unless it illustrate some thought or sentiment contained in the words; and unless this sentiment is grasped and appreciated, and unless these words are enunciated intelligently and distinctly—but without any peculiarity of coarse or provincial accent—the music is likely to be only a great "sound and fury, signifying nothing."

TABLE TALK.

A GRAVE charge has been laid against the Government by the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Mr. Gladstone's administration is charged with "Nobbling the Press." The Premier, alarmed at the fact that the London organs of the Government were no longer disposed to follow him in all his doings, turned his attention to the country papers. We quote from the *Pall Mall Gazette*:—"Why not 'nobble' the country press? The question was asked and answered. The Government, or its agents, are now working a plan for inspiring the provincial newspapers with a yet fuller sense of Mr. Gladstone's merits. Everybody knows what 'rigging the market' means. To counteract the depressing effect of metropolitan

criticism, it has been determined to rig the newspapers in the country. This design is being carried out—or was begun—under disguise of a 'Liberal Press Agency.' For several days past readers of the country newspapers have been regaled with a London Letter, purporting to issue from an agency of that name. The first of these appeared on the 5th and 6th of February, with nothing to indicate that it was not the work of a perfectly independent observer. It foretold the contents of the Queen's Speech—on one occasion a newspaper favourable to the Government was actually able to tell the world what the Budget was to be before it was presented to the House of Commons!—and abounded with flattering allusions to Mr. Gladstone's Administration. Ministers were 'to meet Parliament at the opening of the session of 1873 with a confidence in the political future which even the most eager disseminators of alarmist reports during the recess must admit to be well grounded.' It was 'impossible not to see that the Government appeared before the Legislature in a much better position than it had occupied at the opening of the last session.'" It is not our business to meddle in politics; but there are some political facts which are so very plain, that to pretend to be blind to them is to act a part which is both hypocritical and absurd. One of these facts is that the present Government is no longer a popular Government in any sense of the term. But it can hardly be thought that a falling power can be bolstered up by the supply of partizan "copy" to the country press. This plan, however, seems to have been adopted by the Government or its agents. The *Pall Mall Gazette* exposes the scheme, and the *Times* reprints the article, and recommends it to the attention of Ministers. Englishmen of all parties and of no party may congratulate themselves on possessing at least one able journal that dares speak out. What is the result of a tolerably long career distinguished by such outspokenness? It is this, that the *Pall Mall Gazette*, characterized by independence, public spirit, and the highest ability, has now more real influence on public affairs than any other journal.

THE NEXT QUESTION in the "nobbling" business is, "How is the agency worked? Who are the writers that enlighten public opinion in this gratuitous but not wholly

disinterested manner? Who arranges for distributing Gladstonian leaders, Gladstonian anecdotes, Gladstonian psalms and hymns over the country, so that genius may be exalted without price, and a base Opposition be derided without the trouble of making 'copy'?" The *Pall Mall* says:—"Enough to answer that it is worked in a back-room by Government officials—who are the soul of the scheme—and some fond and faithful newspaper-men who are its instruments. The country reader who pores over its letters and leading articles believes (and it is meant he should believe) that they are the work of honest critics and independent observers; as a matter of fact, they are about as independent, about as trustworthy exponents of unbiassed opinion, as if 'George Glyn' appeared at the foot of every one of them." The "Liberal Press" agent is now prepared to enlighten the world on the subject, on condition that the "Central Press" agent follows suit. We hope he will. Meantime every honest journalist will thank the *Pall Mall Gazette* for making public this scandalous system, and help to give publicity to the way the press has been "nobbled."

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Journal of the Society of Arts*, writing on the subject of the economy of fuel, says he has "long been of opinion that common white chalk would prove a valuable heat raiser and retainer, and would to a considerable extent save the consumption of coal. I commenced some experiments with my steam boilers some years ago; but the prejudice of my engineer and stokers prevented any success worth speaking of. Within these last few weeks, however, I have commenced my experiments anew, and have succeeded perfectly in making a saving of nearly 25 per cent. in coal." That is, he has practically reduced the cost of fuel from 54s. per ton to 40s. 6d. per ton. The writer states that the mixture would be applicable with great advantage to ships and locomotive engines. He says:—"From the intense heat the chalk gives off in consumption, I am satisfied for locomotive engines it would prove an enormous benefit, reducing the weight of fuel to be carried, and preventing the suffocating smoke from the furnace we all occasionally suffer from in railway travelling. These remarks will also apply to the heating of gas retorts and sea-going steam vessels, and,

indeed, in almost all instances where fire is the great active principle." But, of course, to most people it will be from a domestic point of view that such experiments will be regarded with interest. On this point the writer states:—"For domestic purposes I feel satisfied it will prove highly useful, especially in kitchen ranges, large close stoves, or any kind of furnace, the only drawback for use in the dwelling house that might arise would be the probable spilling of any of the lime on the carpets in removing the ashes; and this, of course, a little care would prevent." The proof of every pudding is in the eating. That proof can be given of the satisfactory working of this mixture of coal and chalk is probable from the fact that the inventor asks members of the Society of Arts to go and see it in operation at 8, Finsbury-place, North, E.C.

IT IS CURIOUS that the form of making a bow should for years have stood in the way of our amicable diplomatic relations with China. The history of the Kotow squabbles is not less curious than the fact of their existence. Although Kotow is not to be found in the second volume of Latham's large English dictionary (1870), the word is, as everybody knows, thoroughly acclimatized—belonging to us by adoption rather than by grace. The expressions, he would or would not Kotow to such a one, are so common as to be household words. But the performance of the Kotow itself before that high and most mighty potentate, Son of the Moon, and the near relative of all stars of any respectable magnitude, his Imperial Majesty, Tungchi, of China, &c., &c., supreme, is quite another thing. The ambassador from the Court of St. James's at Peking has, from the first institution of an embassy in China, in 1793, to the present day, more or less angrily resented the proposal made by the Chinese that he should approach the Imperial Majesty of China on his hands and knees, in gait and manner like an Oriental slave, rather than a Minister Plenipotentiary, and a freeborn Briton to boot. So the Kotow question remains where it was nearly a century ago; and it is not likely that the advisers of the young Emperor will allow him to give way in the matter, and receive from Europeans the same form of homage they pay to their sovereigns at home. The cry of Chinese ministers dealing with "barbarian ambas-

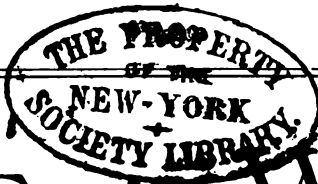
sadors" in the Imperial presence is for the Kotow, the whole Kotow, and nothing but the Kotow. In 1859 the American minister tried his best to cut the knot, but without success. He said he "felt the same respect for the Emperor of China as for his own President." The effect of this on the Court of Peking, however, was not to throw oil on the troubled waters. "This language of the American barbarian just places China on a par with the barbarians of the South and East, an arrogation of greatness which is simply ridiculous." In the reign of George III., Lord Macartney offered to perform the Kotow before Kien-lung (then Emperor), if the Chinese would undertake, whenever they visited England, to perform precisely similar homage before our Sovereign. This they refused to do. But his Majesty Kien-lung gave way, and received King George's autograph letter in the European fashion from Lord Macartney, on bended knee only. Kea-king, the next Emperor, behaved with less sense; and in 1816, Lord Amherst, our second ambassador, was incessantly worried, cajoled, and bored by the Chinese Commissioners on the subject of the Kotow. But he refused to perform any such base homage to his Majesty Kea-king, and he left the capital with his mission unperformed. In 1860, Lord Elgin went out to ratify the treaty of 1858, and to present an autograph letter from the Queen to Hienfung; and his refusal to Kotow led to a rupture at once. Ever since that date we have had a Minister Plenipotentiary at Peking, but he has been persistently refused the right of audience. Now his Majesty Tungchi is of age, and may act in the matter for himself. Upon his conduct depends the solution of the great audience question. To Kotow or not to Kotow has troubled our relations with China for eighty years.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. No unaccepted MSS. will be returned until a written application has been made for them.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.



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No. 270.

March 1, 1873.

Price 2d.

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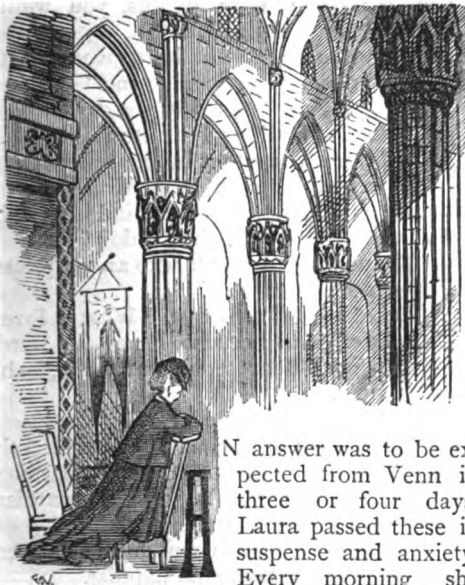
A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXI.



N answer was to be expected from Venn in three or four days. Laura passed these in suspense and anxiety. Every morning she went to the church and

heard the service, daily gaining from her artistic instincts a deeper insight into the mystery of religion. After the service, she would go back to her husband, and pour into his wondering ears the new thoughts that filled her heart. He, for his part, sat like a Solomon, and shook his head, only half understanding what she meant. Nor did she quite know herself. The instinct of adoration, of submission; the sense of a protecting power; the sweetness of church music; the gorgeous ceremonial to which it was wedded—all these things coming freshly

on the girl's brain confused and saddened her, even while they made her happier. For in these early days, when everything was new and bright, she was happy—save for that gnawing anxiety about Venn.

Tuesday came, and Wednesday, but no letter; and her heart fell.

"I shall write again, Philip. He must be ill. He would never else have left my letter unanswered."

Philip changed colour; for in the early days of dishonour men can still feel ashamed.

"If you like," he said, with an effort.

"Yes, write again, dear. We will try one more letter before we go back to London. Sit down and write it now."

The second letter was harder to write than the first. But she got over the beginning at last, and went on. After repeating all she had said in the first, she began to talk of the church—

"I have been to church. Oh, Mr. Venn, why did we not go together? There is no place where I am so happy. It seems as if I were protected—I don't know from what—when I am within the walls, and listening to the grand organ. When we go back to England, you will have to come with me. . . . Do not, dear Mr. Venn, keep me any longer in suspense. Write to me, and tell me you forgive me. I seem to see, now, more clearly than I did. I see how wrong I was, how ungrateful, how unkind to you. But only tell me you forgive me, and ease my heart."

This time, with less compunction, her husband quietly took the letter to a secluded spot under the cliffs, and tore it up. For, having begun, he was obliged to go on. Laura, he was determined, should have nothing whatever more to do with Mr. Venn. She should be his, his own, his only. Some men make angels of their wives. These are the highest natures: perhaps on that account the greatest fools in the eyes of the

world. Philip did not commit this noble fault. He knew his wife was a woman, and not an angel at all. Even in those moments when she tried to pour out all her thoughts to him—when, like Eve, she bared her soul before his eyes, and was not ashamed—he only saw the passing fancies of an inexperienced girl; played with them, the toys of a moment, and put them by. Of the depths of her nature he knew nothing, and expected nothing; only he was more and more passionately fond of her. For it seemed as if the change had made her more lovely. Bright and beautiful as she was before, she was more beautiful now. Some of Philip's five hundred went to accomplish this change, for she was now well dressed as well as tastefully dressed—a thing she had never known before, and was woman enough to appreciate accordingly. She was animated, bright, and happy, except for the anxiety about the letter; for no answer came to the second.

"We will not try again," said Philip. "Promise me faithfully, my dear, that you will not write again without my knowledge."

"I promise, Philip. Of course I will not."

"When we go back to England, perhaps we may think proper to make another attempt; but we have our own dignity to keep up," said her husband, grandly.

Laura only sighed. If only Mr. Venn would write!

Sunday came round, and there was still no letter. Laura grew very sad. Could it be possible that Mr. Venn was angry with her. Was it possible that he would not forgive her? She sat in the church with a sinking heart. For one thing she had already found out—a bitter thing for a young wife, though yet it was but an uneasy thought—a sort of pin-pricking, whose importance she did not yet know: that her husband would never be to her what Hartley Venn had been.

Presently the service was finished. She sat on, while the people all went out of the church. As she sat, she watched the women, one after the other, going to the confessional. They had, then, some one in whom they could confide, some one to advise, some one who would listen patiently to their little tales of sorrow and anxiety. She felt desolate; because, now there was no longer Mr. Venn, there was nobody. Had Philip touched her heart but a little, had she been able to love him, she would not have had the thought. But she did not love him.

There was between the pair the barrier which only love can destroy between two human beings.

The women went away. It was getting late. The confessor—an old priest with white hair—came out, stretching himself, and suppressing a little yawn. The confidence of the wives and mothers had been more than usually wearisome to the good man. As he came out, Laura stood before him.

"Hear me, too," she whispered, in French.

He looked at her in astonishment.

"Madame is English—and Catholic?"

"I am English. I am not a Catholic. Hear my confession, too, and advise me. Do not send me away."

"Let us sit here—not in the confessional, my child. That is only for the faithful. Tell me—you have doubts, you would return to the ancient faith?"

"I want advice. You have given it to all those women. Give some to me."

"Tell me how I can help you."

She told him all her little story.

"I did not know that by marrying him I should separate myself from Mr. Venn. I thought to please him—I did indeed. Oh, what shall I do—what shall I do?"

"My poor child, you talk to an old priest. I know nothing of love."

"Love! it is always love. What is love? I love Mr. Venn because I am his ward, his daughter—because he is my life," she said, simply.

The priest was puzzled.

"I think you must go to see him directly you get back to England. Consult your husband, and obey him. Your—your guardian never took you to church, then?"

"No, I never came to church till I entered this one. It has made me happier."

"It always does—it always does. Come to see me again. Come to-morrow. When you go to England, my dear young lady, search for some good and faithful priest who will teach you the doctrines of the Faith. But obey your husband in all things. That is the first rule."

She rose and left him, a little comforted.

This Sunday was a great day for Vieuxcamp, the day of the annual races. These were not, as might be expected, conducted on the turf, as is our English practice—perhaps because there was no turf except on the mountain side. The Vieuxcamp races

are held on the road behind the long promenade, which stretches from the two piers to the Casino, about a quarter of a mile. The course is hard, as may be imagined; but, as the horses are used to it, I suppose it matters little.

Philip was as excited as a boy over the prospects of a little sport, and was engaged all the morning in discussing events at the Casino. The preparations were on a magnificent scale. Flags were placed at intervals. Gardes champêtres, if that is their name, were stationed to keep the course. There were stewards, who began to ride about in great splendour, very early in the morning; the ladies drove in from the country, dressed in their very best; the fisherwomen had on their cleanest caps; and the day was clear and bright.

"Come out, Laura," said her husband, bounding into the room. "I've got a splendid place for you to see the fun."

"I don't want to, Philip. I think I would rather sit here and read."

"Oh, nonsense," he urged; "it will do you good. Come."

But she refused, and he went by himself, leaving her to solitude and her reflections.

The races began at two. First came a velocipedists' race, which was fairly run and gallantly won, though not by the ladies' favourite—a tall, good-looking young fellow, with a splendid velocipede and an elaborate get-up. A ragged little urchin from the town, on a ramshackle old two-wheel, beat him by a couple of yards. Then there came a running race—four times up and down the course, which made a mile. The competitors were chiefly the fisher-boys of the place. The poor lads, good enough in their boats, are weak in such unaccustomed sports as running. Philip looked at them for a little, and then turned to his neighbour and offered to bet twenty francs on the one who was last, though they all kept pretty close together. The bet was taken. Philip's favourite was a man, much older than the others, who were mere boys. He was a little fat fellow, close upon forty, with a funny look on his face, as if every step was taking out the last bit left. But he kept up. And just at the middle of the last course he opened his mouth quite wide, gave a sort of suppressed groan, and put on the most comical, quaint, and unwieldy spurt ever seen. But it landed him first, and Philip pocketed his Napoleon.

Then they had a walking race, with some of the school lads and others. It was severe upon the sailors. From time to time one would burst into a run, and be turned out of the race by a steward who rode behind. And just at the finish—there being only three boys left, and all close together—the middle one slipped and fell. With the greatest presence of mind he kicked out hard, and brought the other two down upon him. Then they all laid hold of each other, trying to be up first; and, forgetting the terms of the contest, ran in together, amid inextinguishable laughter. That prize was not adjudged.

Then pony races; and then the grand trotting match, of which the Normans are so fond. It was not like the American institution, inasmuch as the horses were simply harnessed to the heavy carriages of everyday life, and the pace was a good deal under a mile in two minutes. Still, the interest and delight of the people were immense. Philip made his selection out of the animals, and offered his neighbour to take the odds against him. It was his neighbour's own horse. He was delighted.

"Come," he said, dragging Philip away by the arm—"come, we will get the odds."

And so Philip found himself in the centre of a gesticulating crowd, making a little book on the trotting match.

Philip had his faults, as we have seen; but an ignorance of horseflesh was not one of them. That day he went to his wife with a flushed face, having come out of the *mille* thirty Napoleons the richer. He might as well have tried to communicate his enthusiasm to a Carmelite nun; because the girl had no more power of understanding the excitement of betting. There was, therefore, one point, at least, in which there would be no community of interests. After dinner, Philip went to the Casino and played billiards with his new friends, while his wife sat at home, and read and meditated. It was the first evening she had been left by herself; but she was not lonely. She had some pretty French novel of a religious tone—there are not too many of them; and she was happily passing over the bridge that leads from ignorance and indifference to faith. In what creed? She knew not: it mattered not. Faith is above dogma. So, while she read, pondered and prayed, her husband smoked, drank, and gambled.

He had not come back at ten, so she

put on her hat, and went to look at the sea. No one was on the beach. The waves came swelling gently in with their soft, sad murmur, as the Sisyphæan stones rolled up the beach and back again. The hoarse voices of the sailors on the quay, a quarter of a mile away, sounded even musical in the distance. The air was warm and sweet. The moonless sky was set with its stars, like diamonds, seeming to fall back into illimitable depths. Sitting there, the girl gave herself up to the thoughts newly born within her—thoughts that could produce no echo in the heart of her husband—thoughts without words: too deep, too precious, too sweet for words.

When the clock struck eleven she was roused by the carillon from her meditations, and went slowly back to the hotel. As she passed through the hall to the staircase she heard her husband's voice, loudly talking in the little room on the right, where lay the papers and journals. There was the *cliquetis* of glasses and the popping of soda.

A cold feeling stole over her, she knew not why; and she went up to bed alone, saddened and melancholy. It was the first real glimpse of the great gulf between herself and the man with whom her fate was linked.

A week after this, no letter having come from Mr. Venn, they went back to London; for Phil's five hundred had walked away—thanks to the *écarté* of the last few days—and he had barely enough left to pay his hotel bill.

There was still another five hundred which he might draw from his agents, and he had his commission.

And after that?

CHAPTER XXII.

PHILIP took his wife to a little cottage near Notting-hill. She was pleased with the place and the furniture, and the little garden; but more pleased still with the prospect of seeing Mr. Venn again. She talked about it all the evening; wondered what she should say; and made her husband silently furious with jealousy and foolish rage. But he said nothing. Only in the morning, when, after breakfast, she came down to him dressed, and announced her intention of going to Gray's Inn at once, he took a line, and sternly forbade her to go at all.

"But you promised, Philip."

"I did," he answered. "But your letters,

Laura. Where is his answer to them? Listen to me—one word will be enough. You shall not go and see this man until he answers your letters, or till I give you leave."

She sat down, and burst into tears. Philip, not unkindly, took off her hat, and laid it on the table.

"It is hard, Laura," he said—"I know it is hard for you; but it is best. He has given you up."

"He has *not* given me up," said the girl. "He would never give me up—never—never. He loved me better than you can ever dream of loving me. I am his—altogether his. You made me promise not to tell him—you made me leave him."

"Why does he not answer your letters?"

"Something has happened. Oh, Philip, let me go."

"I will not let you go," returned her husband. "You, in this new religious light that you have got, know at least that you are to obey your husband. Obey me now."

She sat still and silent. It was what the priest had told her. Yes; she must obey him.

"For how long?" she said. "Oh, Philip, for how long?"

"For two or three months, my dear. Forgive me, I am harsh—I am unkind. But it is best. Besides, other things have happened. You must not go. Promise me again."

She promised.

He took his hat. His hands were trembling, and his cheeks red.

"I am going to my club on business," he said. "I shall not be back till late this evening. Kiss me, Laura."

She kissed him mechanically—obedient in everything; and he went away.

A bad omen for their wedded life. It is the first day at home; and her husband, unable to endure the torture of his conscience about the letters, and the sorrow of his wife, flies to the club—his club of gamblers and sharpers—for relief.

It is late when he returns—a heavy loser at play—his cheek flushed with wine, not shame.

Oh, Philip!

"Tu tibi supplicium, tibi tu rota, tu tibi tortor."

Among the earliest callers on Mrs. Durnford—in fact, her only visitor—was Mr. Alexander MacIntyre. He came dressed in a sober suit of pepper and salt; and,

sitting with his hat on the floor and his hands supporting one knee, he began to discourse to Laura, for her husband was not at home, on the leading topics of the day.

"Did you take my note to Mr. Venn?" asked the girl, interrupting him.

"That note? Oh, yes, I remember. Yes. I had not the pleasure of seeing the gentleman, because he was out. I dropped it into the letter-box."

Laura sighed. There was, then, no doubt. He had received all her letters, and would write to her no more.

"Has there been no answer, Mrs. Durnford?"

"None," she replied. "And I have written to him twice since then; but he will not take any notice of my letters."

The tears stood in her eyes.

"I have promised Philip not to write again without his consent. He says we have done as much as we can. I don't know—I wish I could go round myself and see Mr. Venn."

"Oh, you must not think of doing that," interposed Mr. MacIntyre, hastily.

"So Philip says. But I shall think about it."

Presently she began to ask him questions about himself. It was a new thing for the philosopher to have anybody taking an interest in his movements; and he perhaps "expanded" more than was absolutely prudent.

"What am I to do?" he said. "I am getting old; my hair is gray. People want to know all sorts of things that it is not always easy to tell."

"But the simple truth can always be told, and that ought to satisfy them."

"There," said the man of experience, with a curious look, "is exactly the point. It is just the simple truth that will not satisfy these sharks. I might write a book, but what about? People only buy books written on the side of morality; and the moral ranks are so crowded that there seems little chance of getting in with new lights."

"But you would not write on any other side, surely?"

"Obsaerve, my dear young leddy; if there ever were such a thing as a clever scoundrel, who had the moral strength to take his stand as such, and write an autobiography without the usual sacrifice to supposed popular opinion, he might make a fortune. A general case—a heepothetical case only; but one

which occurred to me. I mean, of course, an unscrupulous man, without religion of any kind—such a man as, to secure his own safety, would ruin any one else who stood in his way, and do it without a pang."

"I should hope no such persons exist. Why are we talking about such creatures?"

"They do exist. I have met them. In the colonies. Mrs. Durnford, if ever you should come across such a man, remember my words. They do exist, these men. They would rather do a good turn than a bad one; but if the bad turn has to be done for their own good, why—then it must."

"But go on about yourself."

"About myself, then. I have a small sum of money, the fruits of many years of careful living and economy."

Oh, Mr. MacIntyre, was not this a superfluous evasion of truth?

"This small amount is rapidly decreasing; what I shall do when it is gone I do not know. It is my rule through life, Mrs. Durnford, and I recommend it to your careful consideration, never to decline the proffers of fate. Very often, behind the drudgery of a position which fortune puts into your hands, may be found, by one who knows how to take an opportunity, the road to wealth, if not to fame. When I was a young man, Mrs. Durnford, I thought a good deal about fame; now I think nothing of it. What does it matter? You do great things; at least, popular things. You get money—you are asked to make speeches at dinners. When you die, your friends write your life and distort your character. Bah! The only thing worth living for is money. Get money—get money. Be comfortable; eat, drink, enjoy all the senses of nature, and care for nothing else. That is what the City people do, in spite of their smug respectability."

"Mr. MacIntyre, is this the faith that Scotch clergymen teach?"

He began to think that perhaps Laura was not yet sufficiently advanced to accept all his views.

"Is your religion nothing?" she asked. "Is it nothing to lead a life of sacrifice and self-denial, like the nuns I have seen in France? Is there no sacred duty of life but to make money? Surely, Mr. MacIntyre—surely these are not the things you preach in your church?"

"You are right," he replied; "they are not the things I preach in my church."

Forgive my inconsiderate speech. I say sometimes more than I mean."

But the conversation left a bad impression on Laura, and she began to regard the man with something like suspicion.

As the weeks went on, she found herself, too, left a good deal alone. Philip was growing tired of her. Her sadness, her coldness, were silent reproaches to him; and he neglected her more and more.

One night he entertained a party of friends. On that occasion, he insisted on her keeping up stairs all the evening, without explaining why. They stayed till three. She could not sleep till they went away, being kept awake by their noisy laughter and talk. Philip came up when the last was gone.

"I'm an unlucky devil," he murmured, pacing to and fro.

"What is it, Philip?" asked his wife.

"Nothing you understand, my dear; unless you can understand what dropping three ponies means."

"No, Philip—not in the least."

He put out the light, and was asleep in five minutes.

The clouds grew thick in Laura's sky. She could not understand horse-racing and betting. She took not the smallest interest in events and favourites. On the other hand, Philip took no interest in what she did: never asked her how she spent the day, never took her out with him, never gave her his confidence. At least, however, he was kind: never spoke harshly to her, never ill-treated her, only neglected her. That was not what the girl pined and sickened for. Philip occupied her thoughts very little. She longed for the old life. She longed for the freedom of her talks with the only man she could talk to. She was solitary in spirit. She was beginning to feel the misery of mating with low aims. She stood on a higher level than her husband, and she did not have that perfect love for him which sometimes enables a woman to stoop and raise him with her.

The new and congenial society of gentlemen more or less interested in the noble and exciting sports of our country, to which Philip's friends had introduced him when he retired from his old club, was banded together under the title of the Burleigh Club. To the name of Burleigh the most captious can take no exception. To such members as the name suggested anything,

its associations were stately and dignified. To the majority, for whom it meant nothing beyond being the patronymic of a noble house and the name of their club, it did as well as any other. It looked well, embossed in colours on the club note paper. By any other name, the Burleigh could not have smelt more sweet. And another name, by which it was not uncommonly called, had been bestowed on it by a body of gentlemen who, though not members themselves, had heavy claims upon many who were. The ring men dubbed it, before it had existed a twelvemonth, The Welshers' Retreat. The members, recognizing the happiness of the sobriquet, jocularly took the new title into favour; and Philip's club had thus two names—interchangeable at pleasure—always understood, and the latter for choice.

This was Philip's club. A tall, narrow-fronted house in the centre of club-land; what an auctioneer would describe as "most eligibly situate." Outside, the quietest and most highly respectable club in London—quakerlike in the sober sadness of its looks. Inside, a gambler's paradise. Day at the Burleigh begins at three o'clock in the afternoon. The blinking waiters would prophecy the speedy ruin of anybody who required their services before that hour. It is the custom of the club for members to leave it at any time; but never to enter it till two or three hours after noon.

Breakfasts are served till five p.m., suppers till six a.m. Between these hours a smart Hansom can always be had opposite the door. Business begins in the pool-room at half-past three; the chat is animated at five, and very lively between six and seven. Then the men go away to dinner, to return any time after ten to whist, loo, hazard, blind-hookey—anything that can be gambled at. Rules? The code is short. It is summed up in this one regulation. Betting debts must be paid on the usual settling days. Card debts not later than the next day after they have been incurred. "Complaints of the infraction of this rule, on being referred to the committee, will render the defaulting member liable to expulsion." And they do expel. O, honourable men, how admirable, how necessary is your rule! In this way the honour of the Burleigh is kept sweet. For the rest, you may do as you like: every member is a law unto himself; their club is Liberty Hall. What manner of men, it

may be asked, is it that people this little Paradise?

The members of the Burleigh are young and old. Postobit has just heard of his election at twenty. Leatherflapper, one of the fathers of the society, is seventy-three. They are rich and poor. Four-in-hand, with the string of forty thoroughbreds in training at Newmarket, and the rents of twenty thousand acres to keep them and himself upon; and Philip Durnford, with five hundred pounds at his agent's, and his shovel in his hand to dig it out with, both belong. They number in their ranks the richest and the poorest, the kindest and the cruellest, the most astute and the most foolish, the most unimpeachably respectable and the most undeniably shady gentlemen in these kingdoms. In some clubs the elders are unsociable, crusty old hunks. Not so here. They are so communicative, so ready to teach all they have learnt, and to tell all they know, that it is quite beautiful to see. Every man disposed to turn misanthrope should witness it. It always goes straight to my heart to see old Leatherflapper taking young Postobit in hand, and putting him up to every wrinkle on the board. True, there is a price to be paid—understood, never expressed: a fee for experience. But what that is worth having on earth is to be had for nothing? You would like to be introduced to this company of wise and benevolent men? You know their faces well. They are to be studied at any race meeting, seen in the Park on sunny days, at German spas, at Hurlingham—everywhere where excitement can be bought. And the bond that makes them such friends and such enemies—you guess it: Gambling. The universal passion. The passion of all times of life, from earliest youth to latest age; of all places, from Christian London to Buddhist Yeddo; of all periods, from the first recorded traditions of savage life till the Archangel shall sound the last trumpet; of men and women, from the tramp cardseller, who bets his sister two pennies to one against a favourite for a race, to the nobleman who stakes a fortune on a cast of the dice; the miser, the spendthrift, the stock-jobber, the prince—gambling has joys for all.

So the Burleigh was founded for play that might run to any height, for games prohibited in other places; as a rendezvous for every gentleman who wanted a little excitement, a place where there should al-

ways be "something doing." You must know the members by certain characteristic habits and ways they have. They breakfast late; they are fond of a devil early in the day; they take "pick-me-ups." In the daytime they are busy with their books. Notes addressed in female hands lie waiting for their arrival in the morning, the writing being generally of such a kind as to suggest a late acquisition of the art of penmanship. They have a keen, cold look about the eyes, where the crowsfeet gather early. For the most part, they dress very carefully; though, sometimes, just a day in advance of the fashion: they affect drab or brown gaiters and cloth-topped boots, carry, in this year of grace, their walking-canes by the ferule, and smoke eternally. From these gentlemen Philip's companions were chosen.

This was his club; this the place where he spent his days and nights, a short month after his marriage, while his wife stayed at home, or, if she went out at all, was afraid to go far for fear of meeting Mr. Venn. In this company, starting in July with his five hundred pounds and the proceeds of his commission—for he sold out—he was trying to make hay while the sun did not shine, and melting it all away.

He kept no accounts; but kept on digging at the little heap, ignorant and careless of how much was left. His great hope lay in his pluck and skill in playing cards, and betting on horse-races. He was often advised by Mr. MacIntyre, who had the useful talent of clear-headedness, and used to come to Notting-hill about Philip's breakfast-time; and then the two would sit and go through the "Calendar" and "Ruff's Guide," while the neglected girl looked on, and wondered what it was they talked about. It was one of her greatest sorrows at this time that she had no books to read—none of her old books; none of those old poets, which she and Mr. Venn used to pore over in the summer evenings, while the shadows fell upon the dingy old court of the Inn. Philip, who seemed to have given up his old reading tastes, had only a few novels. She had never read any novels at all until she went to France. Phil's did not please her. They were barrack novels, stories of camp life, sporting stories—books to her without interest. She could not read them, and put them down one after the other—falling back upon the piano, for

which she had no music, and could only play the things she knew.

MacIntyre saw what was coming. Philip was plunging; and his method, infallible on paper, as the experience of twenty seasons proved, did not work quite perfectly in practice.

Mr. MacIntyre had seen this from the first. In the multitude of his experiences he had even tried the martingale, new to Philip, even before that young gentleman was born. Like his pupil, he had been fascinated by it. The lever that was to raise him to wealth and power: so beautifully simple, so utterly impracticable.

He remonstrated with Philip, pointing out the rocks ahead. But he spoke to a deaf man.

"I know better. It's my cursed luck. I'm sure to warm the ring at —," Philip urged. Then, with a shrug of the shoulders, he added, "And if my luck sticks to me, why—at the worst I shall pay up; and then Laura and I will go away somewhere, borrow money of Arthur, and become farmers in New Zealand, or keep a shop in Ballarat, or mock the hairy-faced baboon somewhere. We shall do. The world is wide."

"It is, Phil. I have found it so. The world is wide. And hungry."

Mr. MacIntyre took the book again, and totted up the amount that Philip had lost at his last meeting. Then he made a little note of it on a slip of paper, and put it into his pocket.

"Phil," he said, with an insinuating air, "I hope you have not lost much since you came home."

He changed colour.

"I've dropped more than four hundred at the club, and a hundred and fifty one night here, when I had those fellows to play loo; besides that pill at the last meeting."

Mr. MacIntyre shook his head. When he went home he made a little sum in arithmetic.

"When I consider," he said to himself, "that in $a-b$, b is greater than a , I'm afraid that Phil is likely to be up a tree, and my great card may very likely be played to advantage."

He went up to dine, a few nights after this talk. Laura was charming, in a fresh, bright dress, and in better spirits than usual. Philip, in one thing, had been disappointed in his wife. He had promised himself the trouble of teaching her the little

courtesies of life—the ordinary accomplishments, perhaps her mother tongue. He never made a greater mistake. She came to him a lady ready to his hand: in all points an accomplished, refined, well-educated lady; how far superior to the ordinary run of young ladyhood he hardly knew.

The little dinner went off pleasantly, and when Laura left them in the little dining-room both men were pleased. She sat down in the drawing-room, and played while they talked over the wine. She played on till the clock struck ten; then she waited till eleven; then she opened the door timidly, and looked in. Philip, flushed in the face, was making calculations on paper. Mr. MacIntyre, with face very much more flushed, had a long clay pipe in his mouth, not lighted, at which he was solemnly sucking.

"By Jove!" said Phil, "I thought I was a bachelor again. Come in, Laura—come in."

MacIntyre rose solemnly, holding by the table cover.

"The shoshiety of leddies is—what'sh wanted—ceevileeze the world. Ye will obsairve—at the 'vershety of which I am—member—Master of Arts—they always obsairved that the shoshiety of leddies—Phil, ye drunken deevil, whaur's my tumbler?"

Laura looked at him with amazement. The reverend gentleman was hopelessly drunk—as drunk as any stonemason in Puddock's-row. Port, followed by whisky toddy, had produced this lamentable effect.

"Philip," she whispered, "send him away."

"All right," said Phil. He was not drunk himself; but, as policemen say, he had been drinking. "All right, darling. Here, old bag of evil devices, put on your hat, and try to tie your legs in as many knots as you can on your way home."

"Shir," said the MacIntyre, putting the bowl of the pipe into his mouth, "apologeeze. This is—this is—eh?—pershnal."

"To-morrow," said Phil. "Don't be frightened, Laura."

For his Reverence made a sudden lurch in her direction, inspired neither by animosity, nor yet by friendship, nor by any amorous inclination, but solely by the toddy.

"I was shtudying—"

"Yes—yes—we know. Don't trouble yourself to say good night."

Philip pushed him downstairs, and out of the door, and returned.

"Oh, Phil, how could you?"

"Well, dear, he did it himself. I always let the MacIntyre have the full run of the bottle. So did my father."

"But he is a clergyman."

"My dear wife," her husband exclaimed, "*they all do it in private life.*"

SOME FRIENDS OF MINE.—II.

THE DOWAGER MRS. MURSELL.

THE Dowager Mrs. Mursell had long outlived her husband, and now, in her seventy-sixth year, showed few signs of decay. There was every symptom that in body and mind she was still perfectly whole. There can be no doubt that from her youth up until now she had thoroughly attended to Number One. Yet, from her conversation about herself, you would infer that she had many infirmities and trials, and had been the most self-denying of women. The name of a martyr is pleasanter than the pain of one.

Mrs. Mursell nursed her feelings in a tender and considerate manner, and complained much of the absence of sympathy in her relatives and in the world at large. She was what may be called a fireside Christian. The shadow of a distant cloud passing over her caused her instincts of self-preservation to cry aloud, and the cry was a useful one in procuring sympathy. It often, too, operated in a circuitous way, so as to turn aside the impending cloud. She disliked the social offices which are pleasant to most grandmothers to perform, and contrived, with a strategic ability natural to her, to escape them. Children are very tiresome, and sometimes domestic events occurred that seemed appropriately to suggest an invitation of the elder ones to her house. But the moment she caught wind of one of these, she raised a cry that put the filial thought to flight, and made such an invitation appear preposterous. She was a good letter writer, and a sentimental one; but the sentiment was never intended to be more than a pleasant, intangible phantom. Now and then "conscience" told her that her children had some natural claim upon her interests; but the voice was transitory as the morning cloud. A stranger to the family history would have supposed, from her conversation, that her life had been a course of self-sacrifice for them. Her heart was warm when she was doing what she liked, and

when others about her were doing and saying what she liked; but the blood turned cold and frosty in the presence of opinions not her own, and her countenance showed some rather dark, prickly shadows in it. She was ladylike even when she was venomous; and told, in a very distinguished way, some of the best stories current in the reign of George III. She was a lady by birth. Her father was a country squire, having a small estate of the value of £1,500 or £2,000 per annum. Her parents were specially delighted when she was born, as it was an event that had not been expected; and she was brought up to have what she asked for.

Really we ought to be very charitable with the eccentricities of our fellow-creatures, as they are probably as natural a growth as mushrooms from mushroom spawn. Some people's opinions grow in them as grapes in a hothouse, and others have them grown in the cold, hard outer world—the better soil of the two, after all.

Mrs. Mursell was a religious woman in her own way, and exalted faith to such a degree that it acted as an extinguisher on good works. It is a very easy and luxurious form of religion, but a mistaken one: which people find out too late, when they are firm fixed in the talons of Apollyon.

Mrs. Mursell's daughters had married well, and gradually reconciled themselves to the idea that granny was not very fond of children's company, and that distance lent enchantment to her view of them.

My friend the curate of St. Loyola's was a torrent, a volcano, and a whirlwind. He reminded one, when he was in the pulpit, of the sea and the waves roaring; a phosphoric light was in his eye, and he was a man of power if not of wisdom. "The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Forms of religion that do not appeal to the emotional nature have only a narrow influence. Quakerism and Unitarianism are for a few spirits that keep best packed in ice. But, strange to say, our friend of St. Loyola's after a time lost all his fervent heat and enthusiasm, and ended up a Unitarian. The fact is that he did not meet with the sympathy his nature required; and sympathy to enthusiasm is what coals are to a fire. His doctrines were not acceptable to the main part of the parishioners. A few sentimental young ladies stood by him to the last; but it was not enough to keep the heat in him, and he

became more and more conscious that he was fighting as one that beateth the air. Once he thought the images and impulses that rose within him were divine inspirations; but sympathy failing him, he began to lose self-confidence and his sleep.

These St. Loyola people watched this devout young man waste and pine away without much pity. He had spoken to congregations of 800 to 1,000 people without fear; but now his nerves were so shaken that he trembled to meet the twenty or thirty who came to the Wednesday evening service, and he turned down byways to avoid meeting people. This good young man had made the mistake of showing his piety in forms that were disliked, and he was condemned to waste and pine away. Yet, who in all the diocese was so self-denying, and so kind and thoughtful to others? But he recovered his nerves—and stuck to Socinianism: he did not, however, lose his kindness of spirit and philanthropy.

A very different man was my friend the Rev. Derwent Ousel. He was a great hater of Papists. He had in early youth conceived a passion against them which continued in his blood. Even his dreams in sleep were overshadowed by it, and the lady he was married to was an equal sharer of his animus.

This kind of passion may in some way or other tend to help a weak circulation of the blood, and, in a circuitous manner, impart tone to the stomach. They might be labelled “religious steel powder,” and “moral oxide of iron.” After all, a standing feud of this kind with the Pope is better than one with your half-cousins or other relations; and it is probable that, in Mr. Ousel’s case, it kept him out of sanguineous broils of a less dignified character. Human nerves and blood require sharpening, as the knives that we carve our joint with; and the Pope acted as a kind of mental and moral grindstone to Mr. Ousel. His Holiness was also, indirectly, a benefactor to his hereditary slow liver; but he is quite unconscious of the debt of gratitude which he owes him. On the contrary, he thinks, in his inmost soul, that he has become rather wayworn and sore-footed through his attacks upon him.

There would be much less controversy in England, on religion and other subjects, if the climate was more equal and warmer.

The great need of Englishmen is not an extension of the franchise, or the vindication of the rights of women, or the disestablishment of the National Church; but it is the need of an increased circulation of the blood. This fluid is as essential to idea and thought in men as air is to their lungs; and it must therefore not only be made in the system, but circulated. It acts upon the brain somewhat as the overflow of the Nile does upon land. Hatred of Popery influenced the currents in Mr. Ousel, as the full moon does the spring-tides on the sea-shore: it made a spring-tide in his veins.

Mr. Ousel’s wife never contradicted him; and that, perhaps, had a tendency to make his blood slow. So Romanism came and stirred it, as the angel did the Pool of Bethesda—only much oftener. It acted upon him as Mr. Gladstone does on Mr. Disraeli, and as Low Churchmen do on High Churchmen; and, to go farther back, as the Sadducees acted upon the Pharisees. Truth, alas, weighs very lightly in the scale against passion.

Gibbon said that he was quite miserable when he had come to the end of his history of Rome; and very likely—though he would indignantly deny it—Mr. Ousel would have been miserable if he had seen the end of the Popes. Yet he declared openly, at meetings, that the downfall of Popery would be his greatest joy and crown of rejoicing. He, however, grew more charitable towards the end of his life—admitting that it was just possible a Papist might be saved. When we get past sixty, most of us think very differently on matters in general to what we did at thirty; but light comes slowly into us.

We profess to ask honestly the question—“what is truth?” but we answer it according to what we like, more than to what it is. There is some sympathy due to Mr. Ousel’s peculiarities on account of the early circumstances of his life. He came into a family living soon after he had left Oxford; and being a little squire of the place, as well as rector, he was rarely contradicted in anything that he chose to say or do. This is the soil that makes prejudice grow and harden in the brain of a man. A little snubbing and gainsaying opens the mental eyes, and moves the vision on toward the charity which thinketh no evil.

Mr. Ousel attended carefully to his material nature as well as to his spiritual. He

was particular about keeping his finger nails well cut; and, having a just dread of corns and chilblains, he had his boots made large. His slippers would have held his wife's feet as well as his own, and he wore in his study a dressing gown that would have stretched round the waists of Gog and Magog. He was most careful what he ate, having a dread of indigestion; and his wife sat and looked with admiration at everything he did, and contributed much to his sense of moral and religious strength.

It is a pity he did not turn the same jealous eyes upon his moral nature that he did upon his physical; but the fact is, he did not suspect anything wrong in that. It is really rather a good thing for a man to have an idea that he is a little bit of a sinner: it makes him watch himself. Mr. Ousel often called himself a sinner, but it was a serpent-form of self-righteousness. Perhaps he would not have liked any of his parishioners to have called him a sinner, and when he called himself one his wife's countenance told him he was a saint; so the word became a kind of moral seesaw between them. He used, in family prayer, to mention the Jews and heathen with great unction of feeling and tone, which changed into harder notes when Romanists came at the tail end; and it brought up from an old servant—who had been in the family twenty years—a genteel groan, suitable to the ears of quality. It was rather a Scriptural groan, but, on the whole, genteel; and it made a good impression in the quarter it designed to make one.

"WRITTEN WITH A PURPOSE."

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

MY DEAR SIR—Having attended at Liverpool, in compliance with a formal summons served upon me, and having given my evidence before Mr. Ogilvie, Surveyor-General, with regard to the matters at issue between her Majesty's Commissioners of Customs and myself, I had supposed that it would not again be necessary for me to vindicate the truth of the statements heretofore made by me in *ONCE A WEEK*; but having read the report of the Board, contained in your last issue, I feel that I must trespass upon your space once more.

If I were dealing with this matter in the columns of a Transatlantic journal, I would

begin by characterizing the said report in very strong terms indeed. But as the venue is laid in England, and as the amenities of journalism in this country require a somewhat milder form of procedure than is sanctioned by American usage, I shall merely remark that the said report is in some respects an absolute perversion of facts, and that its effect, as a whole, is to mislead any casual reader into whose hands it may fall; that it conveys an entirely erroneous impression as to what took place at the investigation; and that, taking all the facts of the case into consideration, I cannot believe the perversion to be other than wilful.

These are grave statements to make with reference to such august personages as her Majesty's Commissioners of Customs, and I proceed to show the grounds upon which I make them.

The report states that—"On review of the whole case, the Board consider that they should fail in their duty to their officers at Liverpool, whose integrity has been so wantonly impugned on this occasion, if they did not record their conviction that the evidence adduced has failed to afford any foundation for the accusation that has been brought against them."

Now, suppose this to be true. Suppose that the evidence *has* failed to prove the truth of the charge. Do the Board for one moment imagine that I went to Liverpool for the purpose of proving the charge to be true? Are they so mole-blind as not to perceive that I went to Liverpool simply because I was compelled to do so, and not for the purpose of impugning the integrity of the Custom House officials. I had no object to fulfil in substantiating what I had written, inasmuch as I was well aware that the public knew the true state of the case, and would readily understand the position in which I was placed. It was not my wish to identify the recipient of my gratuity, and thereby cause his dismissal from the service; inasmuch as I did not then, and do not now, believe the official in question to be in any degree more culpable than others of his class. In short, when I went to Liverpool it was my intention to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth; but of course it was my intention to give no evidence except in reply to direct questions. As the Surveyor-General treated me very courteously, however, and at the commencement of the investigation expressed his opinion that the

evidence would not be published—though he admitted that he could give no positive assurance to that effect—and as he informed me that the only object in holding the investigation was to arrive at the truth, and that he would consider it in the light of a personal obligation if I would relieve him from the necessity of pressing me with questions, I so far complied with his request as to relate the two instances of venality of which I was an eye-witness, in addition to the case in which I was personally concerned.

But if the Board were, as they professed to be, really desirous of arriving at the truth, why did they not employ competent counsel to conduct the examination: counsel whose profession does not compel them to exercise a lofty courtesy in dealing with reticent witnesses, and who would not be compelled to throw themselves upon a witness's generosity in order to get at the facts? And why did they not have the evidence taken down by a disinterested person: a person unconnected with the Customs, and familiar with the law of evidence—some one who would have discarded what was utterly irrelevant, and who could have expressed what was relevant in clear, concise, and intelligible language?

I say, most deliberately, that the evidence, as published, is calculated to give a very erroneous impression of what I swore to at the investigation.

Ex. Gr.—I am made to say that “the reason and grounds I had for making the charges against the Liverpool officials were, in the first place, having always heard that venality prevailed among them, and having been informed by friends of innumerable instances when they had passed their baggage without examination, and in some cases had, I am sorry to say, been guilty of smuggling; and having seen the charge made by other literary men.” Then comes a full stop. After which I am made to say that “one gentleman on board the *City of Paris*,” &c.

The inevitable inference to be drawn from this is that I made the charge from hearsay alone, and that the instances which came under my own observation had no influence in forming my opinion of the matter.

Now for the fact. I stated that the principal reasons I had for making the charge arose out of *my own experience*; but that my attention had in the first place been drawn to the subject by my having been informed

by numerous personal friends who had had actual experience of the venality of the Liverpool Customs officials, and by my having seen the charge made in print by other literary men.

In allusion to the gentleman who informed me of his intention to “tip” an official, and also afterwards carried out his intention, I am made to say that “I don’t know his name, but he was a first-class cabin passenger whom I was friendly with all the voyage.”

Now, during the whole investigation, I only *once* stated that I did not know this gentleman’s name, and that was taken down several lines previous to this quotation; but I am made to say this *twice over*, and the last time it has evidently been inserted in juxtaposition to the statement that “I was friendly with him all the voyage,” in order that it may seem anomalous that I should be ignorant of the name of a gentleman with whom I was friendly all the voyage. But I was at particular pains to explain that there were a great many cabin passengers on board, and that during a sea voyage one becomes friendly with many persons whose names one never thinks of inquiring—such friendliness consisting merely in the interchange of conversation and various little courtesies; and that there was nothing unusual in the circumstance of my not knowing the name of the gentleman in question. *Not one word of all this appears in the report.* Yet what a new complexion it gives to the matter. To the best of my recollection, there were more than a hundred cabin passengers on board the *City of Paris* during the voyage. I was more or less friendly with every one of them. I was certainly as friendly with thirty or forty passengers as with the gentleman in question. Of all these I can remember the names of only six, and some of these six were known to me before the voyage. I don’t suppose I ever heard the names of more than ten or twelve of them. I was friendly with all the officers; yet the captain is the only officer whose name I remember. All these facts do not square with what her Majesty’s Commissioners wish the readers of ONCE A WEEK to believe. They are therefore ignored. Would it be going too far to say that persons who are guilty of mutilating and misrepresenting evidence in this manner are more culpable than the poor subordinate official who tacitly filches gratuities?

I am then made to say—"I also saw, I believe, a steerage passenger take an official apart, and saw their hands joined together, and the official put his in his pocket. The passenger's baggage, which was open, was then passed with a very cursory, if any, examination." The inevitable inference to be drawn from which is that *I believe* I saw this, but am not certain. Would any man in his senses make a statement so ridiculous? What I *did* say was, "I saw a person *whom I believe to have been a steerage passenger*," &c.

So much as to my own evidence. The Board may retort by saying: The evidence which appears in the report is a literal transcript of the evidence signed by you. Why didn't you make all necessary corrections before signing? To which I rejoin: The evidence as published in *ONCE A WEEK* is *not* a literal copy of the evidence signed by me. I notice certain omissions, represented by dots. I am unable to remember of what these omissions consist; but, judging from the manner in which the Board have manipulated and distorted what they have thought proper to publish, I think it quite possible that the omissions might, if supplied, put a different face on the whole affair. But be that as it may, I *did* make certain corrections in the evidence after it had been taken down, and I was proceeding to make much more extensive alterations, with a view to perspicuity and clearness, when I was assured most positively that *the evidence would not be published in the shape in which it then appeared*. As this was equivalent to an assurance that it would not be published at all—as of course it would have been highly improper, if not criminal, to alter it before publication—I read it over very cursorily. Some changes, however, I *did* make; and at least one *material alteration made by me before signing* is ignored in the report. This alteration was in the sentence above quoted, referring to the steerage passenger. I placed the words "I believe," in a parenthesis, thereby changing the structure and meaning of the sentence, so as to make it correspond with what I had sworn to.

It is stated that after the examination of Mr. Fox and Mr. H. L. Sherlock, Mr. Dent, at his own urgent request, was allowed to retire from the investigation. What is the innuendo here? That I was so utterly confuted by the evidence of those gentlemen, that I was anxious to hide my head from the august tribunal before which the evi-

dence had been taken. Now, the tribunal knew perfectly well why I was anxious to withdraw. It was simply because I had duties imperatively requiring my presence elsewhere, and because, as I expressly stated, I had no interest whatever in hearing the evidence either of these or any other gentlemen. The Surveyor-General cannot fail to remember that it was at *his* urgent request that I stayed one moment after my own evidence was given.

It is true that I tendered my thanks to the Surveyor-General for the courtesy that had been shown to me; and I take this opportunity of bearing testimony to the fact that his demeanour towards me from first to last was most kind and gentlemanly. But surely the reputation of her Majesty's Commissioners for courtesy must be at a very low ebb indeed when they find it necessary to parade before the world so utterly irrelevant a circumstance as that one of their highest officers has been complimented upon that score.

The report goes on to say that "before Mr. Sherlock was examined, Mr. Dent asked whether he might cross-question the witness, and was informed that he was at full liberty to do so; but that, notwithstanding this permission, after hearing the evidence he declined to ask Mr. Sherlock any questions."

It is true that before I had seen this witness it was my intention to cross-examine him; but his evidence, when taken, proved to be so entirely negative and unimportant, that it would have been a loss of time to do so. The witness was advanced in years, and was very deaf. It was necessary to shriek the questions into his ear, thereby incurring an expenditure of oxygen quite out of proportion to the results obtained. I believe him to have been a reasonably honest witness; but he certainly swore to what he could not possibly have known to be true, when he stated that "no officer examines baggage without the knowledge of the superior officer;" and, moreover, this statement was made with reference to baggage examined *on board*—where, as I am told, a more vigilant system prevails—and had not the slightest bearing upon the question of baggage examined *on shore*. He also swore that he flattered himself he had "all the first men in America for his clients"!!!—a statement in itself so utterly absurd as to require no comment;

since, probably, not one in five of the first men in America ever visit England; of these one in five, not one in ten employ baggage agents at all; and of these one in ten of one in five, only a moderate percentage employ Mr. Sherlock, inasmuch as there are various other baggage agents in Liverpool who gain a livelihood by attending to the baggage of first-class Americans. So that Mr. Sherlock's "all the first men in America" dwindle down to one in a thousand, or thereabouts. In a word, this very respectable, but not very brilliant, old gentleman was one of that class known by lawyers as "too willing witnesses." At the conclusion of his examination, I explained to the Surveyor-General that it would be very easy for me to torment this witness, and to make him appear very ridiculous; but that as I believed him to have sworn to what he, at all events, believed to be true, and that as his evidence was wholly negative and irrelevant, I would not waste time in cross-examining him.

"The Board observe that Mr. Dent did not identify the recipient of his money among the thirteen officers who alone were employed, on 11th June last, to examine the baggage by the *City of Paris*, when those officers were paraded before him on the 30th ultimo."

This extract is of a piece with the rest of the report, and exhibits a suppressio veri, et suggestio falsi, which, for the credit of the English nation, is, I trust, unique among the reports of English Government officials. I am irresistibly led to the conclusion that dishonesty is not confined to the subordinate officials among the officers of her Majesty's Customs, when I see THE BOARD resorting to such pitiful trickery and shuffling as this, in order to deceive the readers of ONCE A WEEK, and to cover up their own shortcomings. They must have very little confidence in the integrity of their officers when they can descend to such means to smother inquiry.

Allow me to state the facts, without any suppressio veri. I have no object to gain by suppressing or wilfully misrepresenting anything. I am not paid a large salary for neglecting duties which I ought to perform. I can *afford* to tell the truth, and will do so.

The room in which the investigation at Liverpool took place is a very large one, capable of containing, I should think, se-

veral hundreds of people. A number of men—I should think not less than FIFTY or SIXTY—were brought in, in a body, and stood in a row before me; and out of all these—not out of thirteen, as stated in the report—I was asked to pick out the man to whom I had given a gratuity. Nothing is said about this regiment of officials in the published report. The readers of ONCE A WEEK are led to suppose that only "the thirteen officials who *alone* were employed on 11th June last to examine baggage by the *City of Paris*" were paraded before me; and that out of that thirteen I ought to have been able to pick a man whom I had seen but once in my life, and then only for a moment, in a great crowd; he being then dressed in the uniform of the Customs officials, and thus looking almost as much like his fellows as one grain of wheat looks like the other grains which go to make up a bushel. But the fact is far otherwise. I was left to pick out the official in question out of a great crowd, some of whom were in uniform and some not. As I informed the Surveyor-General, I was very much averse to identifying the culprit; and, as he well knew, I scarcely looked at them. The Surveyor-General could not fail to notice this; but, being a gentleman, and, as I then believed, sympathizing with my disinclination to identify, he did not insist upon my scrutinizing the regiment before me. Indeed, so swift and cursory was the glance I bestowed upon them, that I doubt if I should have recognized my most intimate friend had he been among the number.

The long and short of the matter is simply this. Her Majesty's Commissioners know that my article has drawn public attention to a grievance which they, in common with the rest of Englishmen, know to be, what I have already called it in the pages of this journal, "a public nuisance and a national reproach;" and they imagine that the social and official positions which they occupy will enable them to smother inquiry, and to crush a young writer like myself—a stranger, whom they suppose to be without means or influence to stand upon his right. This supposition is only one more blunder down to their account. At the present day, the power of the press is too great and wide-spread, and is exercised too conscientiously, to permit truth to be stamped out by any man or set of men.

A few words as to how far the evidence, reluctantly as it was given, supports the statements contained in my former article and letter. I am told that "the two cases specially referred to by Mr. Dent in his evidence, with the view of proving that the delivery of packages without examination may be secured by 'tipping' the officers, are founded partly upon hearsay and partly upon surmise, and cannot therefore be accepted as any proof that a gratuity was even offered, much less that it was accepted, in either case."

It may well be asked what degree of proof her Majesty's Commissioners would consider conclusive evidence of venality, seeing that they consider the instances given by me to be founded "partly upon hearsay and partly upon surmise." I have sworn that a gentleman apprised me of his intention to get his cigars passed without payment of duty by means of "tipping" an official. I have sworn that immediately upon his landing I saw him take an official apart, and that immediately afterwards the said official *passed and marked his luggage without examination*. This her Majesty's Commissioners consider no proof that a gratuity was either given or accepted. In the other case, I state that I saw the hands of an official and a steerage passenger meet together for an instant, and the hand of the former then go into his pocket; whereupon he passed the baggage with a very cursory (if any) examination. This, say the Commissioners, "cannot be accepted as any proof that a gratuity was even offered, much less that it was accepted." I have sworn in my own case to the actual receipt by an officer of a gratuity. This, say her Majesty's Commissioners, is no evidence of venality, because the offer came from Mr. Dent; although I have especially sworn that the official's manner satisfied me that I should be kept waiting some time unless I "tipped" him. This is the spirit in which her Majesty's Commissioners receive evidence as to the conduct of their officers. Well, I am quite satisfied that the public should decide between us. Dr. Johnson once said, in reply to an addle-pate who was deaf to argument, "I have found you a reason, sir—I am not bound to find you an understanding."

With reference to the evidence of the other persons who were examined, you, Mr. Editor, have said all that needs to be said on the subject. Their evidence goes to

show—what? Simply that they never saw gratuities given, and that they are the very last persons in the world who would be likely to see anything of the kind. They are the very persons of whom venal subordinates would be specially wary. The evidence of these gentlemen, moreover, is entirely negative. It is, indeed, as you have shown, no evidence at all. You have pointed out that if such testimony were entitled to any weight in courts of justice, it would be impossible to convict any criminal of any offence whatever.

During the investigation, it was suggested to me that *porters*, unconnected with the Customs, are allowed sometimes to mark baggage when the trunks and packages (as in the case under consideration) are numerous. If I recollect aright, Mr. Fox swore to this in my presence. The inference sought to be thrust upon me was that the persons whom I saw receive gratuities were porters, and not Customs officials. My reply to this luminous refutation of venality was that if porters are permitted to pass baggage, and to exercise the functions of Customs officials, the superior officers are bound to see that those functions are exercised properly; otherwise, so far as the public are concerned, the blame rests upon such officers and upon no one else. This is not permitted to appear in the report, because it does not reflect lustre upon her Majesty's Commissioners.

One word more. Since the investigation was held, I have come in contact with various gentlemen who are able to furnish ample testimony, if any were needed, as to the venality of Customs officials. But can I ask these gentlemen to voluntarily come forward and subject themselves to the annoyance and notoriety of official investigation? Let her Majesty's Commissioners furnish me with a guaranty that the names of these gentlemen will not be dragged before the world, that no proceedings will be instituted against them, and that they will not be asked to identify the corrupt officials with whom they have come in contact—let them do this, and I will undertake to procure from both sides of the Atlantic such an amount of evidence as will carry conviction to the mind of every sane human being who is unconnected with her Majesty's Commissioners. So far as the Board themselves are concerned, I do not undertake to convince them. There is an old proverb about "a man convinced against his will." So long as the Board are

prepared to back the corruption of their subordinates by refusing to believe anything to their discredit, such subordinates may ply their trade with impunity. No matter how many persons may swear to having witnessed corruption, baggage agents and others will no doubt be found to swear that they never saw gratuities given; and so long as evidence of this kind is allowed to override positive evidence that gratuities *are* given, her Majesty's Commissioners will remain convinced that the integrity of their Liverpool officials has been "wantonly impugned."—I remain, Mr. Editor, yours truly,

JNO. CHAS. DENT.

WINTER REVERIE.

I CANNOT wake a gladsome note to-day,
For Winter's chilling hand is pressing sore
Upon my heart; untunes my every lay—
My lyre rings out no more.

The birds are flitting restless to and fro
In silence, as in grief too deep for words;
And my sad heart is sorrowful and low,
And restless as the birds.

The golden tints of autumn's varied dress
Have long since faded, and the trees are bare;
No flowers now the saddened earth doth bless,
Or scent the winter air.

The withered leaves have long since ceased to fall,
E'en as the hopes of life dropped one by one;
And grief, that hovers with a cloud-like pall,
Blots out from me the sun.

But ah! while yet I write, the sun doth break
Thro' leaden clouds—doth shed a cheerful ray.
Now will I cherish, for that sunbeam's sake,
A brighter hope to-day.

WALTER SEDWIN.

A CRUISE FROM TOR TO MAS-SOWAH.—PART I.

IN the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-nine I was located as a general merchant in Alexandria, the port of Egypt, trading between Dundee, Egypt, and Massowah, one of the ports of Abyssinia.

I feel a regret mingled with pleasure in relating my rambles through a land which has been renowned from the earliest ages, and is replete with the noblest ruins of art and antiquity.

Egypt was the parent of science, the nursery of heroes; but now, alas! the monument of decayed greatness.

It is the land to which Our Saviour was

carried by his mother and adopted father; and yet, to-day, Alexandria and Cairo are only the Cities of the Plain of the Christian era. No man's life was safe if his enemy could afford to part with a few dollars for his assassination. Men, women, and children used to be robbed and murdered in their own homes. A common brooch and the wedding ring were considered of more value than the life of the owner. A blacksmith's wife lost her life owing to her love for Birmingham jewellery. One night, during the absence of her husband, the assassins entered the house through the skylight and strangled her with a piece of wire. In their hurry to get away, they chopped off the hand which had the most rings on it. This the rascals returned to the husband through the post the next day.

Two days after the feast of Easter, which is celebrated by the whole of the Jewish nation in memory of the intended destruction of the Jews in the Persian empire, in company with two Jews and a young Englishman I bade good-bye to Alexandria, and the rascals I left behind me. My countryman was about twenty-two years old. He was a perfect stranger to me, having accidentally made my acquaintance a few days before at the hotel where I lodged. We remained the first night at Cairo, and proceeded to Suez by train next morning. We found Suez full of dust, dirt, camels, donkeys, dogs, flies, fleas, and pilgrims. The population of Suez then, as now, was composed of English, French, Italians, Germans, Arabs, Turks, Copts, Abyssinians, Indians, and Persians. Most of the Englishmen were employés of a famous steam navigation company, whose head office in Egypt is in Alexandria. The rest of the population were traders, sailors, labourers, beggars, Custom House officers, smugglers, and dealers in wet coals. The coal merchants were the most independent and the richest men in Suez. Although they sold their coal for five pounds per ton, it never cost them more than a few pence, which they paid as hush-money to those who were acquainted with their infamy. Having made myself thoroughly acquainted with the ways which they adopted to procure their merchandize, it may not be amiss here to describe it. The coal depôts belonging to the various steam companies whose steamers call at Suez are situate ashore. The large steamers anchor about

one mile and a half from the town of Suez. The coals are put in bags and shipped on board large flat-bottomed lighters and Arab boats. The whole of the boats are worked by Arabs, most of whom speak English, and many of them both French and Italian. The commanders of lighters and boats have always in their possession several coal bags of their own. When they proceed a certain distance from the town, where the water is shallow, they throw a bag, or more, overboard; and then take a small quantity from each of the remaining bags, so as to make up the number for which they were responsible. At low water, the depth of the channel between Suez and the anchorage is seldom over five feet. When the bag is thrown over, there is a string with a large cork and red rag fastened to it. On the first opportunity a party dives and secures the bag, which he takes and conceals until the darkness of the night enables him to remove it to the warehouse of his employers.

The scavengers of Suez are the dogs, who are always lean, prowling, and hungry. They eat anything and everything; and, what is very remarkable, if they find one of their own species unable to move they devour him at once. Almost every second native of Suez has but one eye. The cause of this deformity is dust, and the scarcity of fresh water to wash with.

Things are now more changed. Suez has become an European town, fresh water is procurable much cheaper than in London, and the flags of all commercial nations are daily to be seen steaming up and down the harbour.

Having left Alexandria before the arrival of the English mail, we patiently waited at Suez to receive our letters from the postmaster of Suez. The day after the receipt of our letters we shipped our merchandize, baggage, and provisions on board a large, open Arab boat, bound for Yambo, Jiddah, and Massowah. At Suez we were joined by five Abyssinians, two Christians, three Jews, and a Turk bound for Archico, a Turkish military station, situate on the main land about ten miles from the island of Massowah. The Abyssinians were returning from Jerusalem, and, like ourselves, on their way to Tigris, Northern Abyssinia. Although Jew and Christian are to be found kneeling side by side in Jerusalem, in their native country they hate each other much worse than the Persians and Turks. Our

boat was manned by an Arab captain, who was assisted by a pilot over 84 years of age.

As fresh water was almost as dear as milk, we took only sufficient to carry us to Tor, the only town or village on the Arabian coast between Suez and Jubal. On the evening of the 28th of April, the nacodah, or captain, announced that he was ready to start for Tor the moment the crew and passengers had finished their prayers. The Mohammedans turned their faces towards Mecca; but the Abyssinian Jews and Christians turned theirs in the supposed direction of Jerusalem. Having the shamal, or north wind, in our favour, we made the port of Tor a little before sunrise next morning. Tor is a small, stone-built village, the port of those districts surrounding Mount Sinai. There are sixteen houses and a Greek chapel, and a population of eighty-eight persons, eighty-five of whom are Christians, two Mohammedans, and the Greek priest of the village. The Christians are date-growers and water-carriers; and the two old Mohammedans are partners, and trade in dates, fish, coffee, sugar, butter, and flour. In one of our excursions, on our way home, we had an opportunity of observing a curious process in the vegetable world. It has already been taken notice of by naturalists, but is too uncommon to be known to readers of every class. The date trees were now in blossom, and we remarked the Arabs to be busied about the branches. It is necessary to engraft all fruit trees to obtain good fruit; but the propagation of the date is in another manner. There are male as well as female date trees, which are distinguished from each other by the colour and shape of the blossoms. The male tree yields no fruit; but the gardener must be careful every spring to cull as many blossoms from the male as will serve his purpose. One of these, at least, he must enwrap and bind up in a blossom of the female tree, without which it will prove as barren as the male. The singularity of this operation is heightened by its being discovered by a people who are at present grossly ignorant.

There are seventy-three species of dates known among the Egyptians, Syrians, and Arabians; and yet out of this large number there is only one quality which is considered safe to be shipped by sea, which is known among the Arabs as El Jhahadah.

I found an immense quantity of this date in the neighbourhoods of Bussarah, Muscat,

Zanzibar, and Gennah, on the River Nile. In the neighbourhoods of Bagdad, Bussarah, and Hillah, in the province of Irac or Mesopotamia, the gardeners substitute the law of nature instead of the artificial process. The females are planted in clusters, and a male tree is generally planted in the midst of every four or five female trees. When the flower of the male tree becomes dry in the blossom, the wind scatters the seed far and near, and the female tree becomes fruitful. The dates of Tor and around Mount Sinai are very small, dry, and sweet. They are sold by weight, in packages covered with kid skins. Both sheep, goat, and kid skins are procurable along the shores of the Red Sea for less pence than the shillings they cost in Europe. The chief use they make of the goat and kid skins is to convert them into bags for carrying water or holding butter or oil. Formerly skins of every description were dear, and in great demand; but since the introduction of casks and earthen jars among the dealers in butter and other soft merchandize, the price of hides and other skins has been very much reduced.

On the 14th April, we had completed our supply of wood and water, and taken on board a sufficient stock of provisions to serve us on our passage. We procured our water from the wells of Horeb, which the natives of the district religiously believe to be that spring mentioned in Scripture in connection with Moses and his followers in their flight from Egypt.

This belief is as deeply rooted in the hearts of the Mohammedans as that of the Christians and Jews. Mohammed Ali, the grandfather of the present Viceroy of Egypt, built a house over the pond formed by the streamlet, which is about three miles from where the water gushes from the side of the rock.

On the morning of the 15th, we embarked with an additional passenger, a poor old emancipated Abyssinian slave, who, after twenty years' suffering, became so old and useless to his master that he released him from his bondage. They live upon such crumbs as they pick up in the streets, like so many dogs without owners.

About noon of the 16th April, being favoured with a fair breeze and fine weather, we spread our sails, and about sunset we passed before Chadwan and Jubal, leaving the rock of Tyran about six miles to our

left. Tyran is a conical, bare rock; but is much resorted to by fishermen and divers, on account of the sponges, turtles, and sharks which abound in the neighbourhood. The sharks they spear, but the sponges and turtle they dive for. Many of them can remain two minutes under water, and then not appear much exhausted.

We picked up a fair breeze from the mainland, which died away about two hours after sunset, when we anchored for the night in a small coral cove, close to the island of Sanafir.

The Arabs have a peculiar mode of anchoring their boats among the rocks and coral islands of the Red Sea. When the ruban, or pilot, has selected the anchorage, either himself, the captain, or one of the crew puts two wooden plugs in his nose, and jumps overboard with a rope, to which is attached two large hooks, which he fastens to the rocks, or to some hard coral formation, which must be unfastened every morning by hand.

Whichever way we look, the mountains on shore, and rocks and coral islands, are visible to us. This is an extraordinary and dangerous sea. It is getting worse and worse every year. Although we are not more than six feet from the edge of the reef, yet we cannot get soundings underneath our boat.

There are hundreds of new islands gradually springing up to the surface of the water. The appearance of these islands is undoubtedly the work of the coral animal; but I do not believe, nor can I be persuaded by any philosopher in the world, that the foundations of those marine principalities were commenced at the bottomless ocean.

During my rambles along the Pacific coast and in the East and West Indies, I noticed four kinds of coral formations—lagoons, coral fringes, encircling reef, and barriers. The lagoons are coral rings, encircling a portion of the sea, and only exist in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Although they all differ in formation and appearance, yet they are the works of the same animals. These rings often rise between five and ten feet above the level of the sea.

Having paid great attention to the coral animals of the East and West Indies, I will describe their habits for the information of the readers of ONCE A WEEK.

They are neither insects nor water spiders; but small, soft, gelatinous animals, with whose bodies it is to be found an admixture of stony matter much resembling flint. They

are the slaves of nature, and the contractors and builders of the ocean. On their submarine structure they toil, live, and die; and end their laborious career before death by cementing their own bodies with the last layer they raised towards the completion of that home for the future generation of man. They are to be found by millions, and are visible to the naked eye, in those narrow seas and oceans where their operations are known to be carried on. They die before they reach the surface of the water, or the moment they feel the least heat of the sun. As the coral rings around the circular lagoon often rise from five to ten feet above the level of the sea, certainly that part above the water cannot be the work of the coral animals, unless nature has endowed the structure with either animal or vegetable life, and gradually forced its head above water, and continues to increase until the attraction of the earth and ocean put a stop to its growth. As the corallines are not supposed to be able to live beyond a certain depth, the foundations of their structures must be laid on the head or shoulders of some of those gigantic mountains which have sunk, or may be in the course of rising from beneath.

All the islands in the Red Sea, with the exception of Noorah, Great Harnish, and Dallac, are barren rocks, uninhabited and without water. Three or four of the largest, between Akabah and Jiddah, are generally taken possession of during the pilgrim season by water-carriers, woodcutters, and fishermen from the main land. They erect temporary habitations for themselves and families, and chiefly live on the fish which abound along the coast. They catch the fish by nets, hooks, and spears; but the turtle they generally catch while asleep on the surface of the waters, which they accomplish by suddenly turning it upon its back. However, should the turtle be disturbed before capture, and disappear beneath the water, it seldom escapes its pursuers. The turtle is both a slow and awkward swimmer, and is quite defenceless, even in its own element, when attacked by an expert diver. Each fisherman carries a large net, made of strong twine, to which is attached a long rope about twenty feet in length. With this net in his left hand, and a short spear in his right, the fisherman dives, pursues, and generally overtakes the turtle, which he manages to entangle in the net, and at once haul it to the surface. In

this manner they capture thousands; but they are not so valuable as an article of food as those procurable in the Mediterranean or West Indies. They are caught for the value of their shell, which has become a great article of commerce between the Red Sea, Ceylon, and Europe. The native turtle of the Red Sea and Levant, when fully grown, generally weighs from 150 to 200 pounds. The Arabs on the shores of the Red Sea, having never found a dead one, seriously believe that the turtle species are endowed with everlasting life. It is stated as matter of certainty that the turtle lives over 200 years. In bringing forth its young, nature has taught it to take the same advantage of the sand and sun as the ostrich in the desert. The female turtle generally selects a soft, sandy spot on shore, beyond the reach of the tide, where she makes a hollow nest, in which she deposits between 120 and 150 eggs, which she covers with sand; and then, like the lazy and selfish cuckoo, she abandons her offspring for ever. The turtle and land-tortoise are of the same family, for they can both live in close confinement without food for a period of from 25 to 30 days. When this process is adopted in their shipment from their native seas to Europe, they become very weak and lean, and many of them die on being restored to their liberty.

"THE SIX OF SPADES."

THE title which appears at the head of our article is the title of the Rev. S. Reynolds Hole's last book. His "Little Tour in Ireland" recommended him to the notice of the general public; while his "Book about Roses" charmed every rose-grower who read it, and a great many readers who were not rose-growers, or gardeners, or even people interested in gardening. Now, though "The Six of Spades" is called a "book about the garden and the gardener," its name may mislead. People who only read the title may think that it is a treatise about plants, trees and houses, pots, top-dressings, and composts of the conventional sort. Yet it is nothing of the kind. Though the garden suggests all and flavours all the contents of this pretty book, yet Mr. Hole talks to us so pleasantly, so freshly, and so well, that we close the green covers of "The Six of Spades" with a feeling of regret that we have got to the end. If it

were not that a watering-pot, a rake, a spade, and wheelbarrow soften the effect of the playing eard with six spades in bold relief on it which appears on the binding, we should take the volume at first sight to be a treatise on some game at cards newer perhaps than zetema or bézique; but the presence of the instruments of horticulture, grouped gracefully by a tie of straggling roses round the playing card, reassures us. We find that the Six of Spades is a gardener's club, and that the members are—1, the President; 2, Mr. Oldacre; 3, Mr. Chiswick; 4, Mr. Evans; 5, Mr. Grundy; 6, the Curate. These worthies deliver six characteristic lectures. "On Rosa Bonheur"—not the painter, but the rose—by the president. The other members follow, in the order given above, with "The Lady Alice," "On Bedding Out," "Shows and Showing," "Mr. Grundy's Song," "The Happiness of a Garden." The last, of course, is the Curate's, and a charming discourse it is. But before we get to the lectures, the author introduces us to the lecturers. Mr. Oldacre is the gardener at the Castle, and a "grand old gardener" too. "Six feet high, and straight as a Guardsman—though he has seen the chestnut trees of his great avenue in flower for seventy springs—Mr. Oldacre is a model of manly beauty, from his neat drab gaiters—our ancestors had calves to their legs, and knew it—to the crown of his 'frosty pow.' Was ever hair so silvery? Was ever neckerchief so snowy white? Was ever face—what a razor he must have!—so bright, so smooth, so roseate? There is a perpetual smile and sunshine on his cheeks and in his clear blue eyes, as though he had lived always among things beautiful, and their exceeding loveliness had made his heart glad. What pyramids of pineapples, what tons of grapes, and figs, and peaches, what acres of flowers, tender and hardy, those hands have tended! You would like to hear him respond, I am sure, when we drink his health as our 'King of Spades.'"

We should, for he is a fine character, very finely drawn; and in his discourse—"The Lady Alice"—there is material for a three-volume novel. As it is, his story is a lovely little novelette in ten or a dozen pages.

Mr. Chiswick, "the gardener at the Hall," is the next portrait in this interesting gallery.

"On his arrival in our village," we read,

"he was generally supposed to be an officer of cavalry on leave, or a foreigner of distinction on his travels. Great was the surprise accordingly when coming to church on the Sunday after his arrival he took his place with the domestics and not with the Squire."

He is a rare gardener, though, and a real good fellow. He plays on the cornet-à-piston till he marries dear Mr. Oldacre's daughter.

Mr. Evans is a portrait from the life. He is the President's own gardener, and quite a character.

In his sketch of Mr. Evans, the author gives some very amusing anecdotes of his own boy life, when this dreadful "Dardner" was always ready to spring on his youthful prey.

Mr. Grundy is the smallest of the gardeners, but not the least of the characters. He is coachman, gardener, and—on state occasions—butler and footman too, to the maiden ladies at the Grange.

"An industrious, a happy, and a righteous man. To these commendatory epithets," says the author, "I would append the adjective *cheery*, as characteristic of one who is not only happy himself, but communicative of happiness to others.

"We having seen Joe Grundy dig, were glad to admit him into our Society of Spades. Lustily and with a good courage is his rule in all things. It does one good to see him at his work, and I think of the American's striking words of 'the nobility of labour, the long pedigree of toil,' as I watch him manfully accepting that irksome destiny which the first gardener hath entailed upon us all. A right honest Spade is Joseph. His is no 'lubbard labour,' of which Cowper, in 'The Garden,' speaks as 'loitering lazily if not o'erseen.' If you come upon him when he is resting awhile, he does not hastily resume activity, and so confess that he has been idle, and does not deserve relaxation—I always distrust those demonstrative gentlemen who are so excessively energetic when their employer is present—but he stands at ease until he feels himself refreshed, and then plies his spade once more, with a determination and energy which induce the idea that he has solemnly pledged himself to dig to the Antipodes before tea-time. It is good, I say, to watch him at his work, for 'laborare est orare,' and that work is prayer is as true a text this day as when it cheered the hearts

of those toilsome monks who were long the only, and always the best, gardeners."

At home as a coachman and a gardener, honest Joe Grundy always, his efforts as a footman are less successful. His mistress, Miss Susan, says: "And apropos of Grundy, what *do* you think that delightful elephant did last evening? We had a few friends to dine with us, and it unfortunately devolved upon Joseph to place a pyramid of jelly upon the table. Carried unsteadily, it commenced, of course, a series of the liveliest oscillations, and so swayed itself to and fro, when it reached its destination, that poor Joseph called to it, in real agony of mind—'Who-a, who-a, who-a!' I need not tell you that he concluded the performance by hissing violently when he swept away the crumbs, as though manipulating his horse—for that, you know, he always does."

The author communicated this incident to the late John Leech, who represented it cleverly in "Punch's Almanac."

An account of the Curate gave Mr. Hole an opportunity of delineating his own beau ideal of a country curate's opinions and pursuits, in which we get ever so little of the sermonizing element. But we forgive this to go on to the "Club in Session." We find them in the President's garden house, "a warm and cosy chamber," seated with pipes and tobacco box in solemn conclave. The members arrive, and "before our blazing fire, which roars a hearty bass to the mirthful tenor of the kettle, is a table for our pipe and glass; behind that table a roomy garden seat which will accommodate four of our party, and on either side the fireplace a spacious, comfortable chair—the one allotted to myself," says Mr. Hole, "as President, and the other to Mr. Oldacre." Here, in the winter, the delightful meetings of the club are held; here they talk over the memories of old campaigns, and lay out their plans for new victories at the flower-shows of the coming season. On these occasions the club have no stated subjects for discussion, but pass from one topic to another as the fancy prompts; touching "promiscuously upon boilers, flues, and stoves," and all other matters of interest to the gardener; the conversation "taking an unlimited range, from a caterpillar to the Crystal Palace." Here the Six of Spades sit, "dreaming the happy hours away," chatting and smoking their long Broseley pipes, except for six nights at Christmastide, when each mem-

ber is called upon to deliver a lecture, tell a story, or sing a song in turn. The subjects they chose on the last of these Christmas weeks we have already given. We refer our readers to "The Six of Spades," for their sentiments in extenso. We must put in a word of special praise for Mr. Joseph Grundy's song:—

"Mestur Chairmun, Vice-Chairmun, an' Gentle-mun hall,
I suppose I mun sing as you've made this here call;
So withouts no paldavvers nor rho-dy-den-drade,
I'll sing the sad lot of a bewtiful maid."

We leave Mr. Grundy singing to the favourite air of "Sairey Jane Jones;" and in the name of Mr. Hole's readers, we are sure we may encore both gardener Grundy's song and the reverend author's book. May we soon have the pleasure of receiving another from his kindly pen.

TABLE TALK.

WE have often pointed out the necessity for more judges, and the injury done to suitors by the existing difficulties in the way of getting their business transacted. Our contemporary, the *Law Journal*, gives this lively description of the state of affairs at Judges' Chambers on two successive days last week:—"The judge at the Common Law Chambers rose on Friday last at three p.m., and on Saturday last at four p.m., leaving on both days several matters unheard. On Monday last no judge attended at all until past two p.m. On Tuesday there was, at 12.45 p.m., a perfect mob of barristers' and attorneys' clerks collected round the door of the room in which Baron Pigott had been sitting since eleven a.m. vainly attempting to clear off the mass of summonses still unheard; and at four p.m. we believe that in fourteen cases counsel or attorneys were still waiting their turn. By what mismanagement it happened that within a week of the assizes no judge was to be found at Chambers we do not know, but we most earnestly protest against such a denial of justice as is necessarily involved in the absence of the judge at such a time of the year. We are also satisfied that there is now ample work for one judge on every day in the week, and for two judges on at least three days in the week, and that inconvenience of the most serious character results from the attendance

of only one judge." For our own part, we have long been satisfied that the judges have more work than they can possibly get through with a just regard to the interests of suitors. At the close of every sitting of the superior courts there is a host of cases remaining over; while it is, we are told, "no uncommon thing for counsel and attorneys to be kept waiting for three hours at Judges' Chambers." These delays the suitor pays for, and it is high time that judges enough to do the work of the suitors should be appointed. But the Government would think it madness to spend £15,000 a year more in judicial salaries. Meanwhile, the man who "goes to law" has to wait, and pay for the delay in anxiety and in money tenfold.

WE HAVE HEARD of curious items charged by publishers in their accounts; but it is news to us to hear that it was the custom of a West-end firm to put down the price of a chop and a glass of sherry "given" to the author in the bill. We learn from the report in the *Daily Telegraph* of the case of *Moxon v. Payne* that part of the answer to certain charges was, Mr. Webb (the counsel) said—"As regards the charge of his client having appropriated partnership money to his own use, the explanation was simply this—that it was a business custom to entertain authors at Dover-street, and also occasionally at Mr. Payne's own residence, in which case the cost was charged against the business, and would be also debited against the published works." It does not appear from this report whether this "business custom of entertaining authors" at Mr. Payne's "own residence," and at the house of his firm in Dover-street, was carried out only in the case of those authors who had sold their interest in their writings to the firm of Moxon and Co., or also to the cases of those authors who published on other terms. If the practice of debiting the dinner "against the published works" was applicable to the latter cases, we can only say it was rather hard on the gentlemen who were invited to dine at "Mr. Payne's own residence," but to some extent also at their "own expense."

PERHAPS THE COAL question is just now more the question of the day to an English Paterfamilias than Irish education schemes, about which he knows little, or Central Asian politics, about which he knows less.

The price of coal, as the poor buy it—it would be a farce to quote the price per ton—has been for some days in London 8d. per $\frac{1}{4}$ cwt. The normal price had been settled for years at from 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 4d. per $\frac{1}{4}$ cwt. The privation of the poorer classes, caused by the unexampled price of such a necessary of life, is very great, witness the report of Dr. Whitmore, officer of health of Marylebone, one of the greatest metropolitan districts:—"It has come to my knowledge that, owing to the present high price of coals, many of the destitute poor in the parish are enduring great privations. In some poor families that I have heard of, fuel is obliged to be economized in the following manner:—A fire is lighted early in the morning to boil the kettle for breakfast, after which it is put out and not re-lighted until the time for cooking the dinner, when it is again put out, and not re-lighted until tea-time. Surely it will be manifest to every one that, apart from the misery which the poor shivering children of these families have to endure, the effects of such privation upon their health must be very serious. At the best of times they get but a scanty supply of nourishing food to create animal heat; and now, with the present low temperature, to be ill-clad and almost without fires to warm them, it seems almost too much to hope for that the amount of animal heat necessary to sustain life can be very long maintained." Facts that speak for themselves, and need no comment from us. The question is how to provide heat without coal, or it is how to economize the coal. It is not very easy to find a satisfactory solution of the difficult problem.

IT IS WITH pleasure we learn that "an improved cab has just been tried in Leeds. It is arranged to carry four persons in the same space as an ordinary Hansom, has clean and safe entrance and exit, plenty of windows warranted not to chatter, and is from 1 cwt. to 2 cwt. lighter than the ordinary Hansom." If we may trust to the description of the improved cab, it is as near perfection as can be expected at sixpence a mile.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation. Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W.C.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

ONCE A WEEK

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No. 271.

March 8, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.
CHAPTER XXIII.



ABOUT the same time that Philip Dormer, Lord Chesterfield, was bringing the powers of his great mind to the alteration of Old Style into New

Style, by making our English year begin on the first of January instead of the twenty-fifth of March, and cheating the common people of eleven good days of the year of grace 1752, his right trusty and well-beloved friend, my Lord Bath, after spending ten days at Newmarket, delivered himself of a sentiment. His lordship was pleased to remark of his favourite sport that "it is delightful to see two, or sometimes more, of the most beautiful Animals of Creation struggling for superiority, stretching every muscle and sinew to obtain the prize and reach the goal; to observe the skill and address of the Riders, who are all distinguished by different colours of white, blue, green, red, or yellow, sometimes spurring or

whipping, sometimes checking or pulling to give fresh breath and courage. And it is often observed that the Race is Won as much by the dexterity of the Rider as the vigour and fleetness of the Animal." The flourishing era of the English turf dates from the time of this memorable saying of Lord Bath's; and it is doubtful if the change in the calendar introduced by Lord Chesterfield has had one tithe of the effect upon manners and society that this new fashion set by Lord Bath of patronizing horse-races all over the country has been the means of bringing about.

It is still as delightful as it was in the days of the second Charles or the second George to stand on that magnificent expanse, Newmarket Heath, and watch, from the rising ground at the top of the town, or from the A.F. winning-post, the struggles "of two or sometimes more of the most beautiful animals of creation," though the "skill and address of the riders" are not always turned to the account of making the "beautiful animals" they bestride stretch "every muscle and sinew to obtain the prize," as seems to have been the custom in the innocent days Lord Bath knew. Probably, in his lordship's time, Roping, as an art based on scientific deductions, had not been invented, though his description mentions "checking and pulling," but it is for the now obsolete use of giving "fresh breath and courage." What the noble author would say if he saw a field of thirty horses facing the starter for a fifty pound Maiden Plate, T.Y.C. (A.F.), and his distinguishing colours "of white, blue, green, red, or yellow" complicated and modernized into "French gray, scarlet hoops and chevrons," or "black white sleeves, Death's Head and cross-bones," we do not care to speculate upon. In his time, honest races were run over four and six mile courses; a match was the favourite description of race; betting was not a profession; and the Scum did not invade the sacred precincts of the Duke of

Rutland's heath. A noble sport was in the hands of noble men.

Now——

Well, this is hardly my business.

"Obsairve," said Mr. MacIntyre, speaking to his pupil, Philip Durnford, above a hundred years later, "the fascination of this noble sport. You never knew a man in your life who had once tasted the delights of the turf who did not return to them again as soon as he had the means. There is something about it that no man can resist, break him as often as you like. If he has got the money to go racing and bet, he goes racing and bets. I knew a man who had three several fortunes, and lost them all gambling on the turf," Mr. MacIntyre proceeded to say; "and, Phil, ye'll obsairve that when he came into a fourth, he went and did likewise with that one also."

Like every idle young man, with the command of cash and the slightest possible amount of egging on, Philip Durnford was inclined to fiddle a bit at long odds. He had on some score or so of occasions taken a long shot, backed a tip or a fancy, before he had become the instrument in the hands of Providence of rescuing Mr. MacIntyre from his advertising agency. But he was not sweet upon the practice; for he had hardly if ever won. It is notorious that at all other sorts of gambling a man invariably wins at first. This is not so in wagering upon horses; and Philip, with the common inclination to bet, and his full share of love for the sport, felt a little soured by his experience. Now, part of the universal scholarship of Mr. MacIntyre was an interest in horseflesh—a knowledge of betting, and an experience of races. Added to this, he was an infatuated believer in the well-known doubling martingale. Practising on the credulity and ignorance of Philip, he unfolded the secrets of this wonderful system of winning fabulous sums, as his—the MacIntyre's—whole and sole discovery and property. And he represented to that willing ear that if he only had the means of working it out, the Fuggers in the past, and the Rothschilds in the present, might be regarded as poor men compared with the *ci-dévant* pedagogue.

"Eh, my dear young friend, it's just the mighty lever that can make us meellionaires, an ye'll only believe it."

And there was evidence forthcoming to support the assertion. Racing calendars for

twenty years were referred to, piles of paper scribbled over, and two or three lead pencils consumed over these calculations. The system stood the test of all these years; generations of horses passed away as Phil and his mentor tested the lever's strength, and no run of luck was ill enough to break it. Philip believed in it—as, after such an array of evidence, who would not?—but he doubted MacIntyre.

"And do you mean to say you found this out yourself?" he often asked.

And without either blush or smile, the old vagabond declared that he was the great discoverer, and accordingly rolled a Newtonian and Copernican eye on Philip, and gave himself the airs of the Spaniard holding in his hand the key of the Incas' gold, or of Raleigh with El Dorado in full view.

1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512.

These figures were MacIntyre's ladder of fortune; and he offered boundless wealth to needy Philip Durnford, on the modest condition of "standing in." He had confided his great secret to him, and he trusted to his honour.

His pupil was convinced and fascinated. Could the favourite lose ten times in succession? MacIntyre said no. Could a tipster be out ten times running? MacIntyre said no. Could Philip's own selection be wrong ten times? MacIntyre said no. Could any mortal thing happen ten times? Mr. MacIntyre's calculations were there to give it the lie.

So they worked away at the books, going carefully through the results of thousands of races. They applied their lever to betting on billiards, boats, guns, cards, dice—anything that a wager can be made about; and nothing could happen in the ordinary course of things to beat them.

Philip rejoiced, for he held power, and honours, and wealth in his hand. He was the lucky possessor of the certain method of making a colossal fortune. He could break the ring, the banks, the world of gamblers. He did not envy his richer brother now, nor any man. He only pined at the little delay that kept him from beginning. His broker was the slowest fellow in the world.

"The mighty lever that can make us millionaires"—he held it in his hand; and the fulcrum was the Newmarket July Meeting, two weeks hence. He began to spend his great wealth. He dreamed long day dreams. He was rich, famous, generous, too, to poor

Arthur, with only three or four thousands to spend in good years. He made up the deficit in bad ones. Arthur was a brother, after all, and could draw on him for what he liked. Laura, his wife—no princess of Russia had such jewels. His four-in-hand was the admiration of the park. His horses were always first. If they cost their weight in gold, what did it matter? He could pay it. He won the Derby. The most splendid Prince in Europe came into his box to drink champagne-cup with him, and congratulate him on his success. He bought vast estates—the envy of the envied—Mr. Durnford, the millionaire! He had his troubles, too. He distressed himself when he had bought all the land in the market—in parcels large enough to be worth having. He had to devise schemes for keeping his secret from the ring, or betting would be over. He could not get on all the money he wanted. His friends quarrelled about his wealth. People watched him in the ring—followed his lead—mobbed him.

Châteaus in Spain, and castles in the air beyond all power of description, he built on MacIntyre's ingenious multiplication table.

But in all his unbounded belief in the doubling martingale there lurked a doubt. He never could credit Mr. MacIntyre's statement that he was the inventor, though that canny gentleman stuck to his lie with characteristic hardihood. If he had been disposed to tell the truth, he might have mentioned that he got it from a groom at Melbourne, who in turn had got it from a little shilling "Guide to the Winning Post," which had been read no doubt by hundreds of people who had a shilling to lay out. The author of the pamphlet, again, was indebted to somebody before him; and so, on ad infinitum. But the curious part of it was that all these persons claimed the invention of the system of doubling, and imparted their information as something of a very secret and confidential nature. In this way, Philip Durnford received it from Mr. MacIntyre. He gave a solemn promise not to tell it to anybody, but to go to work as speedily as possible to make his own and his mentor's fortune.

MacIntyre had received the precious talisman as a secret. He believed that few people knew of it, that those who did must grow rich by working this most productive vein. He honestly believed in his system, and gave it to Philip as a chart to guide him

over the shoals and quicksands in the sea of turf enterprise to the land of gold on the other side. He had carefully worked out—always on paper, though—every known method of winning money by gambling; he had seen generations of backers and bettors "go," from a late noble marquis with a capital of a quarter of a million, to "Ready-money Riley" and his lucky five-pound note. Before Mr. MacIntyre's eyes all had "gone" the same way. It was only a question of time. Their ruin, the philosopher attributed to want of system; and among all the systems his own was the best. He had waded through all the "Racing Calendars" from 1773 to date, had applied his system to every race for a period of ninety odd years, and on paper he had never broken down, and was the winner of many millions. He showed his figures to Philip, and completely satisfied him. But Philip, being a genius, went to work to improve it; and he tried, on paper, all sorts of little modifications of his secret method of breaking the ring. Not to go into petty details, he broke the ring in half a dozen different ways, and became Cræsus six times over. The leaves of his pocket-books were scribbled over with a thousand repetitions and combinations of the same series of figures; and he argued with himself that he was not going to gamble—it was merely speculation.

"The mathematician, De Morgan," said Mr. MacIntyre, "remarks that a gambler ceases to be such when he makes his stakes bear a proportion to his capital, and takes no hazards that are unduly against him."

And Philip Durnford's capital left him a large reserve, over and above his working money, for contingencies that might arise. So, he started with a light heart on his course of speculation. For a few days all went well. A fortnight brought a change, and showed him that paper and practice are two mightily different things, and that his system could not be worked out, if he had had the pluck to do it. Half his money was gone in following his system. The other half was punted away in indiscriminate wagering on any tip that might turn up trumps.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHACUN à son secret. Philip had his, and he kept it well. Every young fool who airs his inexperience on the turf—and, for that matter, every old one—has his

own way of breaking the ring. How many of these ingenious devices are the same, fate knows and bookmakers may guess perhaps. The infatuated themselves guard their secrets more closely than their honour; and the system, method, modus, martingale—call the thing by what name you will—is never spoken of by the lucky possessors. They are careful over each operation, for fear some inkling of their royal road to fortune should be discovered; jealous, lest on turning over the leaves of their books some eye, looking over their shoulder, should see their game. Once out, they think, the mischief is done. Everybody will do as they do; winning will be a certainty; and in a trice there will be no ring for them to break. The motive is selfish, but easily understood; for is not the world we live in selfish, and the least disinterested corner of it a betting-ring? Granted a system that makes winning certain, and that it is generally known, and there is the end of betting; and with it, your own particular chance of becoming richer than the Rothschilds. No wonder, then, that when you have the magic talisman in your pocket you keep it there, jealously buttoned up. That thousands of men have carried such a talisman for turning all they touched to gold, that thousands of men have reduced winning on the turf to a certainty—on paper, are matters of common knowledge. That theory is one thing and practice another—in a word, that the systems do not work to the satisfaction of their owners—it is sufficient to call attention to the fact that there are as few Rothschilds among us as of old; or to the pockets of the greasy ringmen, still stuffed as full as ever with Bank of England notes. The common fate of methods based on paper calculations had befallen the martingale which Mr. Philip Durnford had hugged to his heart for half a season. Owing its existence, as Philip believed, to the original intellect of Mr. MacIntyre, modified and perfected by his own hand, he felt as certain of the great results to be obtained from working it out as he did that the Bank would change its notes for gold on demand. With his hat jauntily set on his head, a flower in his coat, and the blue satin note case Laura had quilted for him with her fair fingers in his pocket, crammed with bank notes, he had paid his guinea, and plunged proudly and defiantly into the Babel of the ring at the Newmarket July.

Here he was, at the beginning of Novem-

ber, driving down to Kingdon races in a Hansom—alone with his thoughts, which were far from pleasant, with his betting-book to remind him of past mistakes and misfortunes, and all the money he had in the world in the inside pocket of his waistcoat—that pocket that was to be found in all his waistcoats, secret and secure, in which he had meant to carry away the spoils he wrested from the ring.

Down on his luck, and as nearly desperate as a gambler can be who has one throw left, there was this chance for him still—the two hundred pounds he had about him: one month of racing. In that month, with luck, he might turn the two hundred into thousands. Without luck—well, it hardly mattered.

The method had long since been cast aside. He made his bets now without any reference to it. He had followed the phantom Chance through seven losing weeks. They had ruined him. There is nothing demoralizes the gambler like a long tide of ill-luck. His judgment leaves him. He can no longer thread the mazes of public form, or make clever guesses at the effect of weights in handicaps. He makes this wager and that, for no reason but that a feather turns the scale. In his mind, the strongest reason why a horse should lose is that it carries his money. He never backs the right tip; and the only consolation he has is to quarrel with luck, and call it hard names. These had been Philip Durnford's experiences of the "glorious uncertainty of the turf" for seven miserable weeks of the worst season for backers the oldest turfite could remember. Undreamt-of outsiders were always coming in first, till the very ring men avowed that they were tired of winning. The slaughter had been great, and complaints of default were loud and deep. Doncaster had punished some, the first and second weeks at Newmarket had settled others. This noble lord's and that honourable gentleman's accounts were absent from Tattersall's on settling day. Backers could not stand against such luck, it was said in excuse. There was a pretty general stampede for the Levant among the shaky division. But Philip's little account had always been forthcoming till after the Newmarket Houghton. He had taken his shovel, and dug away manfully at his little heap of sovereigns, and paid his debts every week to time; but that last week in Cambridgeshire

was a facer. It had settled him. When he added up his book after the first day of the meeting, he knew he had wagered and lost more than he could pay if he sold the coat off his back. Then he smiled the bitter smile of defeat, and, in the language of the sport, "went for the gloves"—that is, he had four days' good hard gambling, well knowing that if the result of the week's work was against him he could not settle. So, being desperate, he was foolish, and betted in amounts three times heavier than he was in the habit of doing.

"Ma boy, take ma word, the captain'sh going for the glovesh," said a discreet Hebrew, placing his dirty jewelled paw on the shoulder of another of his tribe. "I don't bet no more with him. I'm full agen anythink at all."

"Vy, Nathan, vy? Mистер Vilkins settled for him all right last week."

"I'll tell you vy, Morris, ma boy. Ven I see a young feller as always used to be satisfied vith havin' a pony or fifty on the favourite for a sellin' race a bettin' in hundreds of a sudding, I know vat it means. Look, there's Nosey Smith a layin' him two centuries agen Bella. Not for me, that's all. Mark me, now, he'll go. . And nobody knows nothink about him. I've looked in the peerage: there isn't no Durnford in it as I can find. They'll book anythink to anybody now, bless me if they won't! Hallo, hallo, hallo! Who'll back anythink? Any pricesh agen some o' these runners! Full, Captain Durnford, sir, agen all the fav'rits."

For Philip had not done with Bella yet, and asked her price of Mr. Nathan Morris, diamond merchant, of Bishopsgate-street Without, money lender and leg in any part of the world he might happen to be in.

And Mr. Morris was right. Philip was betting all to nothing, for if he lost he would not pay; and he laughed as he pencilled down the name of Bella till two openings of his book were filled with it. Then there was the fun of watching the race, and seeing Bella struggle past the post.

"Of course," thought Philip; "beaten by a head just on the post, by what I always thought was the worst animal in training."

Then he rode off to while away a few minutes with luncheon—partridge pie, washed down with champagne—coming into the ring again with a smile on his face, and filling more pages of his book with the name of another loser.

He had no money, but he had credit; and credit is a very wonderful thing. It is the only substitute for wealth. To borrow a quotation from Defoe—"Credit makes the soldier fight without pay, the armies march without provisions, and it makes the tradesman keep open shop without stock. The force of credit is not to be described by words. It is an impregnable fortification either for a nation or for a single man in business, and he that has credit is invulnerable, whether he has money or no." And there is nowhere in the world where credit will do more, or where there is more of it to be had, than in the betting ring. It enabled Philip to "keep open shop without goods" till the next settling day.

That day came, and Mr. Durnford's account was absent from the clubs. His name was mentioned pretty often in the course of that Monday afternoon. He was wanted very badly. Then people began to wonder who he was, what he was, why they had booked bets to him. Well they might wonder. This tendency to trust every man who has paid ready money with his bets for one month at most is one of the most remarkable things about the professional layer. Very often he does not know the address of his debtor, or even that the name he bets in is the one he commonly makes use of. The layer must pay every week, or his living is gone. The profession is propped up by this solitary kind of honesty. The bookmaker always pays; but the backer may retire at any moment, as Philip did after going for his gloves without getting them.

The ring men used very bad language when the next Monday after his default came, and there was no news of him. Nobody had seen him "about" that week either. One little man had drawn a fiver of him in the street, having met him casually in Chancery-lane. This speculator took a hopeful view of things, and thought all would be right. You see, he was out of the mire. The others swore, and said they should be careful in future whom they trusted, &c.; but they had often said so before, and it only wanted a young adventurer to pay up regularly for three or four weeks, to be able to do with them exactly what Philip Durnford had done.

When the fatal week was over, and he came to reckon up the cost of his

recklessness, he wished he had never done it. But it was too late. He was neither more nor less than a welsher. So men would say, he knew. And he had still left some of the feelings of a man of honour. So, for a day or two, he shut himself up at home—moody, very irritable, and very wretched, but safe. He blessed his stars that only one of the pack of ravening wolves knew his private address. If he had had the means he would have paid that man, under promise in writing that he would not tell his whereabouts to the rest.

When, after a day or two had passed, he ventured out, he expected every moment to be stopped, or to meet some emissary from the ring—to be insulted, jeered, hooted at, as a thief and a welsher. But he was safe enough: the ring-men were plying their busy trade a hundred miles from where he stood. So he got over his fear, and showed his face pretty much as of old. Then came the chance of retrieving all. Kingdon clashed with a popular Midland meeting. Not three of the bigger men who wanted him would be there. He would go; but keep out of the ring, and bet in ready money. They could not stop him from doing that; and he had been very lucky at Kingdon in the summer.

His Hansom drove along the muddy road at a good speed, for he had covenanted to pay the driver "racing price" for the day's job. They passed the last straggling rows of suburban houses and got into the open country of the "way down Harrow-way," halting at all the recognized hostleries on the road. "Half-way houses" the driver called them, where he could just rinse the horse's mouth, and—what was equally necessary—his own. Philip drew his Dutch courage from a private fountain of inspiration in his breast pocket. An unpleasant fear of recognition kept him in his seat; but the honest cabman spent his fare's small silver for the good of the house at every post they put in at. And it is almost superfluous to add they touched at all they passed, or that to the sturdy sons of Britain this is more than half the pleasure of a day in the country. As Philip furtively peeped out through the oval side windows of his cab, he saw nothing to alarm him. He was recognized, too, by a few friends, and by some of the small fry of the professionals. These people, it was plain, had not heard of his little mishap. It gave him

courage to go into the ring when he got to the course. He paid his six shillings at the gate, not with the air of the expatriated wretch he was, but more like his former self—the loving patron of a noble sport. He was early in the field. The ring was thin. He mounted the wooden steps of the Grand Stand, and hid himself safely away on the farthest corner of the top shelf. From this eminence he watched and watched—drank in the undulating landscape with his gaze, or scanned the faces of the ring below through his glass. The clearing bell then sounded; the numbers of the runners were hoisted on the board; he ticked them off on his card; the riders' names were added to the numbers; the saddling bell rang; the horses streamed out of the enclosure; the roar of the odds began in the ring down below. He pricked his ears, as the war-horse at the smell of powder, or the veteran hunter at the tongue of hounds, and forgot his luck as he strained his ear to catch, in the roar of the Babel, a notion of what it was they were making favourite, and how the market was going.

"How do they bet?" he asked, as one after another pushed up the steps to where he stood.

He was satisfied the worst favourite could win at the weights, if it was only trying. To assure himself of this, he edged and dodged his way through the ring out to the lists. Not a hungry creditor to be seen: only the small scoundrels who infest the metropolitan gatherings were assisting at Kingdon. The big rascals were away, a hundred and twenty miles off, in the Midlands.

He had begun to feel safe, and confident in his judgment, when he saw some well-known sharps putting down the money in small sums at the lists on his own selection.

"She'll win," he said, with an excited chuckle, as he pressed forward in the crowd with as springy a step as the mud round the boxes permitted.

"Good goods—the old mare is," he heard an ex-champion of England whisper in the ear of a sporting publican.

"Going straight?" inquired the confidant, putting his dirty hand before his greasy mouth. "Party got the pieces on?"

"Hold your jaw. 'Er ead's loose—that's enough for you; be quick and back her, before it's blown on."

Philip profited by what he had overheard, rushed to the nearest list, wrenched a crumpled fiver from his inside pocket, and reached up to the man in the box.

"Corinthian Sal!"

The fist of a burly ruffian seized his note, squeezed it up and shoved it into his bag, calling to his clerk behind—

"Fifty to five—Corinthian Sal."

"Right!"

"Here's your ticket."

Philip took it, and in trying to get away from the list-man's stand he was met by a hurrying crowd. There was a rush from the ring to back the good thing, outside. But the men who wanted to do it were well known. In an instant the pencil was run through the "10" before the name of Corinthian Sal on all the lists in the gambling thoroughfare.

In vain the excited regiment from the ring plunged through the mud and mire, proffering their money to the list-keepers. They were answered everywhere, "Done with." The secret was out. The little Selling Plate was squared for the seven-year-old daughter of Corinthian Tom.

"Another ramp! And I've just laid fifty to five agen her," groaned the man Philip had bet with.

"Aint they hot on these selling races?"

"He's a hot member as I've laid it to. These swells don't come outside unless they know something."

When Philip managed to get back to his old stand, he met with a friend or two who wanted to hear "what he had done," and whether he "knew anything;" and he had the pleasure of telling them he was "in the know," appearing to be much wiser than he really was, and letting them think he had backed the mare for a good stake.

When he saw her canter past the post, hands down, an easy winner, he inwardly cursed his luck at having won when, comparatively speaking, he had "nothing on."

"Just my luck," he said, as he pocketed the fifty-five pounds he had drawn; "but let us hope it has taken a turn."

He patronized the refreshment booth, drinking some champagne with his friends; and then turned his attention to the next event, reduced to a match, as only two of the seven horses entered came to the post. The talent were some time in making a favourite. It was even betting between the two weedy screws that cantered down to the

starting-post. Philip, thinking it prudent to keep for the present out of the ring, for fear of any little contretemps that might arise from meeting somebody who wanted him, went out to the lists, and at last betted the fifty pounds he had won, in several small bets, posting the money. He backed the favourite, laying fifty to forty on it—and lost.

Is it necessary that I should ask my reader to follow the fortunes of Philip through the two days' racing at Kingdon? To him who is initiated in the mysteries of the turf my narrative will be intelligible, but probably uninteresting, for it is a tale he knows by heart. To the uninitiated this chapter must be to a great extent unintelligible, therefore uninteresting. But the exigencies of my history—as will be seen from what is to follow—seem to demand that I should give a brief outline of Philip Durnford's doings on this last appearance of his in the charmed circle devoted to the interests of dishonesty and dirt. Apologizing, let me comply with the necessity, offering only, as some sort of excuse, the plea that I draw from the life.

After losing the fifty pounds he had won, Philip had still his little capital in his pocket intact. Three succeeding races relieved him of three-fourths of it.

"What forsaken luck!" he laughed bitterly, being desperate. "Fifty left! One more flutter, I suppose, and then——"

"Hallo, old Durnford!" a friendly voice sounded in his ear. "Well, how are they using you, old man, eh? I have just landed again."

"I should say I had the devil's own luck," replied Philip, "except for the curious fact that fellows say that indiscriminately of the best luck and the worst."

"Well, we'll say you have the devil's worst luck, then."

They chatted till the numbers of the next race were run up.

"The good thing of the day," cried Philip's friend. "I know three or four of the clever division that have come down on purpose to back this. It was backed down to level money this morning in town."

"I'll see what they offer. Shall I do anything for you?"

"We shall get no price about it," said Philip.

Philip hesitated—only for a moment.

"Yes."

"I'm going to put the money down upon it, I can tell you."

"Put on a century for me."

Then he stole out to the lists and emptied his pockets. The odds he took against Triumpher were six to four. With the hundred his friend had put on by this time, he stood to win nearly two hundred pounds. With a beating heart he made for his place of vantage on the top of the wooden steps. As he ran in at the ring-gate he was stopped by a man who had often seen him bet, but with whom he had had no dealings before.

"What do you want to do, Captain Durnford? Let me have a bet with you this time—come."

"Triumpher?" said Philip, raising his eyebrows in a careless way, and chewing the end of his pencil.

"Fifty to forty, sir?"

"No." And he made a move to go on, feeling sure the odds would be extended.

"Sixty to forty, sir?"

"Not good enough."

"Here, I won't be be't by you," cried another ring man. "I'll lay the gentleman eighty-five to seventy."

"All right," said Philip.

"Twice, sir?"

"Twice."

As he asked the man's name and wrote it down in his book, there was a general hoarse laugh among the bookmakers, for they saw intuitively what he had failed to see—namely, that he had refused six to four, and taken a fraction over four to three and a half. But the laugh, when Philip had left them, was turned in quite the opposite direction, when an acquaintance called out to the man who had done the clever trick—

"So help me, you've gone and done it, you have!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the layer.

"The Cap'n ain't paid for a fortn't. Now?"

The "Ha, ha," now became "Oh-h, oh-h!"

"I'll off the bet. Where is he?"

But Philip had altered his mind, and was gone right away across the running track to the other side, opposite the stand. He was sitting out—dangling his legs over the white railing, and looking at his muddy boots. Oh, the exquisite pleasure of seeing the flag drop—the runners go down into the dip—come sweeping up the hill!

Ruined or made! His heart sank.

"Curse the boy! why does he not bring the horse out of the ruck? He's shut in."

Hope at zero. Ruined.

"No, by Jove, he's got him out! He's done it! Hur-ray-y-y!"

Up went his hat, high in the air. "Triumph!"

Yes, the judge sends up "No. 21," and Phil drove home nearly happy, with a mind full of resolutions to win, on the morrow.

Wednesday morning broke in happy uncertainty as to whether to be wet or fine. But by twelve o'clock in the day the rain fell fast. But nothing short of the crack of doom—hard frost excepted—will stop a race-meeting. All the difference the weather apparently made to Philip was that, instead of spending two sovereigns in going down by road, he spent two shillings in going to Kingdon by rail. Wrapped in his mackintosh from head to foot, he felt in better heart than on the day before, and all went well till he was recognized on the road and insulted by one of his forty-seven creditors for debts of honour.

"Well, what will *you* do?" said Philip, angrily.

"You show your face in the ring, and you'll see what I'll do. Call yourself a gentleman—I call you a welsher."

He shouted the last word, and as there were a lot of people about Philip rushed for a fly, and swore at the man for not driving on in a moment. He did not pay for admission to the ring. He knew the man would keep his word, so he played the undignified part of an outsider, and was, besides, in constant dread of being hooted by his enemy. There is no charge easier to bring, nor more difficult to rebut, than the charge of "welshing" on a racecourse, and the mob has a nasty habit of hunting the victim half-naked into the nearest pond, and hearing the evidence some other day. This unpleasant practice made the young man careful whom he met. Altogether things were unpleasant. There were seven races on the wet card. They were run in a pouring rain. There was no trusting to form, for the horses could not act in the wet, and all calculations were upset. Of the first four races on the card, Philip won two and lost two. Then he sat out and looked on once without a bet—sad, weary, and dripping.

On his fancy for the last two races he

staked all the money he had in the world—and lost it.

"Well, old fellow," said an acquaintance whom he met on the platform at King's Cross, seizing him by his shoulders and giving him a friendly shake, "if you've been backing horses in red mud you've come off a winner, and no mistake—you've got plenty of it sticking about you. What a day it has been!"

Philip muttered "Damnable," in an undertone, and getting into a cab directed the man to drive him home. As they left the station yard, he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out the only coins he had left. They were just enough to pay his fare.

A CRUISE FROM TOR TO MASSOWAH.—PART II.

BEING detained by calms and contrary winds, we found ourselves within sight of the rock of Tyran on the evening of the 18th. On the morning of the 19th, although the sea was as calm as a pond, we found ourselves drifting at the rate of two knots an hour. The invisible cause of our advancing in the direction we were going—S.S.W.—was an under-current of the sea, which runs continually during the existence of the northern winds. One current runs from Suez, and another from the Gulf of Akabah, which meet between the island of Jubal and the rock of Tyran. The current from Suez takes a S.S.E. direction, and ends its force on the Arabian shore, between Yamboo and Jiddah; whilst the current running from the Gulf of Akabah rushes S.S.W., terminating its power and existence on the Egyptian coast, a few miles to the north of Cosier, the great grain port of Upper Egypt on the Red Sea.

As these currents in the northern and narrow parts of the Red Sea are known to increase both in force and danger in proportion to the velocity of the winds blowing from Suez and Akabah, they may properly be called wind currents. Farther south, about the latitude of Jiddah and Suakin, another sort of current exists. These, being generated from the equatorial heat, and the motion of the earth on its axis, may be styled the circulating currents of the equator. Large oceans and seas have their own currents; but they are the offsprings of the expanded heated waters of the tropics, from which they move and disperse over the

watery world. Some of these currents take an active part in the commerce and climate all over the globe. In 1855, when returning home from Bombay, far south of the Cape of Good Hope we felt the influence of the great Gulf Stream, through the medium of the equatorial currents.

The currents of the ocean may be divided into four classes, some of which are only local. Among the first-class currents may be reckoned the Gulf Stream, the equatorial current, the north and south polar currents, the Mediterranean and Black Sea currents, and the Indian Ocean southern current.

Many a poor mariner has met with a watery grave from his ignorance of the position of the ocean currents, especially when sailing among the dangerous coral reefs and islands of the East and West Indies.

One evening in 1865, on my way to Jamaica, on board a sailing ship, when within sight of Mount Surat, we thought we were making about six knots an hour; but at twelve o'clock at night, when we took a lunar observation, we found we were making ten knots instead of six. In January, 1867, I was a passenger on board the American man-of-war *Lancaster*, bound for Norfolk, Virginia. One evening, when within twenty miles of the mouth of the James River—the entrance to the port of Norfolk—we met with rough weather, and were forced to put to sea. The wind became stronger and stronger. We furled our sails, took down the upper spars, and ran before it with almost bare poles for three days, when we suddenly discovered a change of climate—we were in the middle of the Gulf Stream. The temperature of the sea water the day before was 56 degrees; but that of the Gulf Stream next day we found to be 76 degrees. This great and sudden difference of the temperature of the ocean close to the American coast and Gulf Stream will at once explain the cause and effect of the expansion of the waters of the ocean.

Having said more than I at first intended about coral islands, corals, and corallines, I will now start for Massowah (weather permitting).

On the evening of the 22nd we picked up a light land breeze, which enabled us to sail direct for the port of Cosier, where we arrived on the afternoon of the 24th, about three o'clock. Cosier, which boasts of a safe and splendid harbour, is the marine capital and only port of Upper Egypt on

the shores of the Red Sea. The present is not the ancient town of that name. The old town, north of the present, was once an immense place, of great importance; but since the mines of precious stones in the neighbourhood turned out something like the Honduras Railway Loans, the poor ruined people fled, and settled down at modern Cosier, Gennah, and Luxor, on the River Nile. The modern town is built of stone, one storey high, in a crescent shape, close to the harbour; but the appearance of everything visible to the naked eye is far beyond my power of description. Whichever way the eye turned there was not a tree, a shrub, or a blade of grass to be seen, except a few clusters of withered date trees, within the crumbling walls of the desolate village. I noticed that the same disease of the eye exists here as in Suez. Almost every second person had but one eye, and over twenty-five per cent. of the population were beggars and cripples. Those who were willing to work for an honest living were either employed as stevedores, common labourers, harbour porters, or grain dealers trading between Cosier and Gennah.

Gennah is a large grain port on the eastern bank of the River Nile, and about ninety-eight miles from the port of Cosier. Although Upper Egypt, on both banks of the River Nile, has hundreds of thousands of bushels of all sorts of grain to spare annually, yet the people of Yemen, and even those of Cosier, often die of starvation.

This fearful state of things, on the shores of that country whose productive soil brings forth more grain and vegetables than any other of its size in the world, does not arise from the poverty of the people. No; it is from the scarcity of transport animals. What a blessing it would be for Upper Egypt, as well as for the inhabitants who reside along the shores of the Red Sea, if the Nile and Red Sea were united by a single line of railway or canal! There is no means of transport at present between the Nile and Cosier, except by camels, mules, and asses. If a canal were made from Gennah to within half a mile of Cosier, and worked on the same principle as our English canals, millions of acres of desert land would become productive; and the starving, roving Arabs who now infest the road and ruin the traffic along the Cosier valley, would quietly settle down, and build their simple abodes within reach of

their natural beverage, for the want of which they now so much suffer.

The population of Cosier was about 2,000 persons, among whom there were twelve Christians and eight Jews. I have been to almost every part of the world, and yet I have never been to any place of note in which I did not discover a Scotchman, an Irishman, or a Jew. A Scotchman will thrive where an Irishman would starve; but a Jew would make an honest fortune where both would be forced to take to the highway for a living.

On the morning of the 27th, after having obtained such articles as we required for the rest of the voyage, we made every preparation to take the first advantage of the afternoon breeze which generally comes across the Cosier valley.

It is the custom in the East when strangers arrive or depart, whether by land or sea, to pay their respects to the head man or chief of the town or tribe which he is supposed to govern or rob. About two p.m. I went to thank the governor for his hospitality, and to bid him farewell.

On my entering his reception-room, he was sitting on his haunches like a kangaroo, watching the rising sun. He bade me be seated, and ordered his servant to supply me with the best things in the house. Just as the servant left, the governor once more turned his face towards Mecca, and commenced to pray in a loud tone of voice. He could hardly have repeated the name of Allah and the prophet twice, when a gang of drunken sailors—most of whom were covered with blood—rushed into the room, each claiming both justice and vengeance.

The governor jumped upon his legs at once, and cursed them for having disturbed him in the midst of his devotions.

"Hajee," he said to me, "what punishment would you inflict upon those dogs if you were in my place?"

I said I would make them go on their knees side by side, with their faces towards the holy city of Mecca, and there pray to God and the prophet to endow them with power to control their wicked passions.

He ordered them at once on their knees, and thanked me for the original mode I had suggested to punish those who never scruple to violate the laws of God or man.

The culprits at once obeyed, and devoutly prostrated themselves on the ground, with their angry and bloody faces turned towards Mecca and Kerbella.

The believers in the Mohammedan faith are divided into two castes—the Sheas, or followers of Ali, and the Sunnies, or the followers of Mohammed. The former believe in the sanctity of Kerbella, where Ali and his children mingled their ashes with the soil; but the latter, the followers of Mohammed, look upon Mecca and the surrounding districts as the Garden of Eden, purged and purified of its sins by the holiness of their prophet. These two sects hate and curse each other like so many demons. The Bedouins of the Desert are also composed of Sheas and Sunnies, and whenever they meet they fight like dogs and cats, but seldom kill their fellow-men through their religious bigotry.

Just before the worthy governor had finished his afternoon prayers, Achmet made his appearance, with a full bottle of Jameson's Irish whisky, and three large tin pots as substitutes for glasses. The moment his devout master saw him, he jumped on his haunches like a kangaroo watching the setting sun. He remained silent for a minute or two, then he screamed, roared, and cursed like a trooper at the servant for his ignorance and disobedience.

"You son of a sea cook," said the indignant follower of Mohammed, "did I not tell you to bring these gentlemen the best thing in the house?"

"You did, master," said Achmet; "but as I saw you take so much of this stuff of late, I thought it was the best thing you could afford them."

He rose at once to his feet, stroked his beard, adjusted his petticoat uniform, and politely dismissed his followers and hangers-on. When his followers left, he became cheerful and talkative.

"Gentlemen," said he, "as the spies of the Mosque and Government have left us, let us enjoy ourselves as rational mortals, and see and drive away from our minds the melancholy effects of those horrid objects which surround us."

After we had helped ourselves to the contents of the bottle, he asked us our candid opinions of the fiery liquid with which he had the honour to treat us. After a few minutes, he said—

"As you seem to like the stuff, what you do not drink to-day I beg of you, as a favour, to accept from me as a farewell gift on your departure; but be on your guard, and do not use it as I have done. A

month ago I received a dozen bottles of this gin from the captain of an English ship which had put in here for a cargo of grain for Jiddah. I have been in the habit of giving and receiving presents from my boyhood; but this fiery present from Ireland beats anything I ever heard of. The evening I escorted the six cases from the ship to my house, I was strong, hale, and hearty. I was able to read, write, smoke, and ride with any man within fifty miles of me. But, alas! to-day I am all shakes and shivers, and my stomach is like a furnace within me. I have not slept a wink for a week. The other night I jumped off my couch and seized my sword and pistols, and challenged my tormentors to mortal combat. As I walked around my room, taunting them with cowardice, I suddenly stood in front of the largest mirror in my haram, but being so much changed, and not knowing myself, I fired right and left until I smashed every article in the house. All my servants and three of my youngest wives fled in terror, leaving me alone in my madness. Where they are gone to I know not, and even if I did I dare not molest them, for they all know too much about my private affairs. Ah," added the governor with a melancholy shake of the head, "our holy prophet, Mohammed, made a great mistake by not prohibiting all other spirits, and leaving us the free use of wine."

In the midst of our conversation, our Nacodah entered, with smiles on his face; and announced a fair breeze from the north. As we were only waiting for the Shamal, which we lost before arriving at Cosier, we bade good-bye to our kind friend, and went direct on board.

A few minutes before sunset, as we were leaving the port, Achmet came on board, bringing us several small presents from his master; among which may be reckoned a large milch goat and eight bottles of whisky—the remnants of the fiery present from Ireland.

After giving Achmet a few coppers for himself and some tea and coffee for his master, we set our light sail and ran right before the wind, making an average of eight knots an hour. Owing to the combined lights of the moon and the phosphorescence of sea, we were enabled to continue our course all night. Next morning, before the break of day, our Ruban, a thorough robber of the sea, held a council with the rest of the crew.

The object of their meeting was to cast lots to see who should go and milk the goat. The lot fell on the promoter of the plot. He borrowed a large jug from one of our servants, and crept upon his face and hands from the forecastle to the poop, where the goat was fastened. As we were lying down within a few feet of the goat, the old pilot cut the cord with which it was tied, and quietly dragged it amidships, where he commenced to milk the animal. The goat and the pilot had a tough battle between them. No one was to interfere, and if the pilot did not succeed he was to pay a dollar for the failure. He could get no milk, so he paid the fine and proposed to cast lots again. This time the lot fell on the Turk, who was a passenger on board, bound for Archico. When he approached, the enraged creature stood upon its hind legs and struck the milkman a fearful blow with his powerful horns between the shoulders, throwing him into the bilge-hole, breaking his ribs as well as our only earthen jug in pieces. The poor Turk cried out murder and mercy, but the rascals who were the real cause of the mishap only laughed at his misery. We pulled him on deck, and made him as comfortable as we could under the circumstances. I did not ask the cause of the accident, as I was fully under the impression that he fell into the hole whilst walking on the deck in the dark. Next morning the goat became the greatest object of curiosity on board. Every one among the native passengers and crew came and looked at it, laughed, and ran away. The whole cause of the laughs and accident was that the governor's servants sent us a half-wild Billy instead of a domestic Nanny.

Eight days after our departure from Cosier we found that we had run 769 miles from Suez, at the rate of four miles per hour.

Two days before our arrival at Massowah a funny but almost fatal accident occurred, in which a playful porpoise took the most prominent part. About noon, when sailing between the islands of Noora and Dalac, we met a large shoal of porpoises, which turned back and accompanied us for several hours. They played like children around our little barque, jumping over one another. With the exception of the dolphin, there is no fish in the sea so playful as the porpoise. Not having molested them, they grew so bold as to approach within two feet of our vessel; in fact, many of them jumped much higher out

of the water than we were above it. By this time we had prepared our spears and spear ropes; some went aft, whilst others went to the forecastle. In less than ten minutes we brought six large ones on deck. They were very powerful in the water, but quite helpless out of it. The spearsman must be very cautious how he coils his rope where he stands, and how he throws the spear. Often, when he thinks he has caught his fish, he finds himself twenty feet under water, with his legs entangled in his spear-rope, and completely at the mercy of his game unless it is in shallow water. On this occasion, a passenger was one of those who was provided with a spear. He said he never threw a spear or lance in his life, yet he was too proud to be instructed in the art. The foolish fellow was well punished for his pride. When we were in the act of hauling our sixth fish on deck, we heard a cry of "Man overboard." On looking round we all missed the passenger, who, it appeared, had speared a large porpoise, and got his legs entangled in the rope of the spear, and was drawn overboard. We were then sailing close to the shore, in about six feet of water. When the porpoise was struck, it went at once to the bottom, but returned to the surface in less than half a minute, accompanied by the spearsman, who fortunately got released from the coils of his own rope. If the water had been deep he would undoubtedly have been drowned, which, according to his after-career in life, would have been no great loss to humanity. We cast our anchor in the port of Massowah on our twenty-second day from Suez.

Massowah is a small town built of wood and grass, with the exception of two or three houses owned by the Government officials, and stands on an island about 250 yards from the shore, and it has a mixed population of Arabs, Turks, Abyssinians, Jews, and Christians. The island is about three-quarters of a mile long, and half a mile broad, but without wood or water. It is the greatest slave-market on the shores of Abyssinia, from which the Mohammedans of Hodidah, Mocco, Gunfoodah, Jiddah, and Mecca are supplied with slaves.

Several Abyssinian Christians and Shaggallah converts were publicly sold in my own presence in the public streets of Massowah. To my astonishment I found that there was a national treaty between the British Government and his Imperial Ma-

jesty the Sultan of Turkey, whereby the latter obtained the sanction of the British Government to import slaves from the shores of Abyssinia for the use of the inhabitants of the holy cities of Yemen. This treaty was signed by the Governor of Aden and the Pasha who commanded the district of Jiddah.

A CASE AGAINST ALMA MATER.

To the Editor of "ONCE A WEEK."

DEAR SIR—You have done such good service of late in exposing shams and swindles, and in calling public attention to grievances which have been allowed to acquire, from immemorial custom, the character of almost prescriptive rights, that I cannot doubt your readiness and willingness to make generally known a grievance which has long been, and while it exists will continue to be, the source of much trouble, and vexation, and sorrow to hundreds of British fathers: though I would have it distinctly understood that it is the sons as well as the fathers that I have in view in calling attention to the abuses which constitute my case against the Universities.

In bringing grave charges against the social economy of these venerable institutions, I feel that I am undertaking a very delicate and unpleasant task. I am in the position of a son bringing an accusation against his own mother—an unnatural proceeding which will seem to sensitive minds but one step removed in horror from the crime of parricide. I find, however, some consolation in the thought that, so far as I am concerned, Alma Mater proved herself to be a stepmother rather than a mother, and cannot, therefore, expect to be regarded with more natural affection than usually falls to the share of that stony relative.

With this apology and excuse for my apparent ingratitude, let me proceed to state my case against Alma Mater, premising that everything herein related has been derived from my own experience, and that I must be understood as confining myself to the University to which I had, and have still, the honour to belong. Similar evils exist, I am aware, in the sister University; but it is possible that they may proceed from a slightly different though equally faulty system.

Even outsiders, whose knowledge of University matters is principally confined to the

boat race and the senior wranglership—I place them in the order which public interest assigns them, both within and without the Universities—have some dim and undefined ideas, gathered from rumour, of the existence of some giant abuses at the Universities, notably of the monstrous system of credit which prevails there, and of the reckless expenditure which it fosters among the undergraduates; but few who have not themselves been sufferers from them have any conception of the extent of these abuses, and of the serious consequences which result from them.

It is generally understood that a University education is an expensive luxury, and people take it for granted that there are good and sufficient reasons for its costliness, without any wish, apparently, to inquire whether it ought to be costly. That it ought not to be so is becoming generally admitted; that it need not be so, I hope to show in this paper. Englishmen have such a blind reverence for facts that they are slow to question the right of any fact to existence, or to believe that a fact is not necessarily a truth. Anything which has established itself as a fact has acquired, to English minds, a moral dignity which renders it sacred, no matter how false or iniquitous the foundation on which it is built. And so, John Bull is of opinion that because University education is costly, therefore it ought to be costly; and he settles the difficulty by saying, in his off-hand, Podsnapian way, that people who can't afford to pay the price musn't send their sons there—that is all.

But then there are a good many persons who have, by much trouble and the exercise of considerable economy and self-denial, scraped together a sum which they think will amply suffice to gain their sons a University education. They have carefully counted the cost; they have grounded their calculations upon the best possible data they could obtain; and it seems clear to them that they can provide for all the necessary expenses. In eight cases out of ten they are deceived and disappointed: the expenses turn out to be terribly heavier than they had calculated; and in the end, after disbursing something like twice as much as they had laid by, they find, to their consternation, that their sons are up to their eyes in debt, of which, till that moment, they never knew the existence. Fathers are so apt to be reticent on these matters—

and such reticence is only natural, after all—that I am sure it is not generally known how much misery and trouble are caused to both parents and sons by the debts contracted during a University career.

The father impoverished, obliged to retrench his household and make every member of the family suffer, and the son hampered by debts his father cannot or will not pay, dragged down in his efforts to win his way to position by this millstone round his neck—both are ashamed to allude to these painful matters, because both take it for granted that the result is due solely to the son's folly and recklessness, and that the blame, therefore, rests solely on his shoulders. Now, it is that erroneous opinion that I wish here to combat. I maintain that the cause of these results is not to be looked for in the individual folly of the undergraduate, but in the system which permits, if it does not encourage, extravagance for which I can really find no milder epithet than reckless. I am not speaking of those wild young prodigals whom no restraints in the world can check in their wanton and idiotic wastefulness. I am speaking of the bulk of the young men who pass through the University—those who lie between the two extremes: who are neither very good nor very bad, neither very wise nor very foolish. How is it that, with hardly an exception, they incur debts which more or less injure their parents, and more or less hamper themselves in beginning life? I believe the true answer to be that Alma Mater—professing, as she does, to stand in loco parentis to all her students—not only scandalously fails to do her duty by them, but actually helps them to become victims to extravagance; not troubling herself to take the commonest precautions to keep boys fresh from school, for the first time their own masters, utterly inexperienced in the ways of the world, from becoming the prey of a whole swarm of greedy and rapacious harpies, whom experience has made adepts in the art of pigeon-plucking.

And that brings us to the consideration of the provisions which are ostensibly made by the University as guardian of the welfare and morals of the two thousand young men who are placed under her care. The college tutor is the embodiment of Alma Mater's parental care. He is invested, pro tem., with the duties and responsibilities of

a father; and Paterfamilias, after a pleasant interview with him, goes away with the idea that his son is in safe hands—likely, indeed, to be far better looked after than he would be at home; because it is the special duty of the tutor to exercise a supervision which the father, with other demands upon his time, would find impossible.

The functions of the college tutor are probably misunderstood by outsiders, owing to the erroneous impression conveyed by the term "tutor." In this case it is used in its strictly literal and legal meaning of a guardian. The college tutor takes no part in the instruction of his pupils—or wards, as I should rather call them—unless he should happen to be one of the college lecturers. The college itself, in its corporate capacity, provides for the instruction of the undergraduate, and takes that department out of the tutor's hands. The tutor's business is solely to watch over the welfare of his wards, to help them by his advice and experience, and be, in short, their guide, philosopher, and friend. He is, as a rule, a man of high standing in the college; his moral character is always unimpeachable; and he is generally a thorough gentleman, of an age that makes him not too old to be a friend, and not too young to be a mentor. I have no word to say against the character of college tutors as individuals. But when I look at the weighty charge entrusted to them, I cannot but say that they do not properly fulfil the duties which devolve upon them. Let me give an instance in proof of this assertion. My own tutor had no less than 160 men "on his side," as it is termed—a tolerably large family for one father to look after. He received £18 a year for his nominal guardianship of each of these wards; thus making out of them an income of nearly £3,000 a year. It was his custom to invite his pupils, in batches of twenty at a time, to a formal breakfast once a year. Each pupil, on his arrival at the commencement of a term, paid him a complimentary and formal visit; and at the close of each term another formal visit, to obtain the necessary permission to "go down." During the interval, providing the pupil observed college rules—attended lectures, chapel, and hall a certain number of times in the week, and was in his rooms every night before the stroke of midnight—he might neither see nor hear anything of his tutor, unless it suited him to call. What I wish to make

clear is that it is entirely optional on the part of the pupil to take advantage of the counsel and guidance of his tutor; and when a man has 160 pupils to look after, how is it possible that he can keep watch over the mental, bodily, and moral welfare of each? How is it possible for him to be on such intimate terms with each pupil as to stand in the place of a father to him? The relationship between them must be a cold and formal one; and the tutor can have no means of ascertaining what sort of a private life his pupil is leading. This is the great defect in the tutorial system in large colleges. In the very small colleges, where the tutor has not more than forty or fifty men at the most to look after, he can, of course, cultivate much closer relations with his pupils. But as more than half of the total number of students at my own University is contained in two large colleges, where the system is as I have described it, I think I cannot be fairly said to have misrepresented the facts, or to have called attention only to an unimportant section of the University system.

As the Universities are at present constituted, it is far safer for a father to send his son to a small college than to a large one; for at the former he will at least have the benefit of real tutorial supervision. In all respects I consider small colleges preferable to large ones, and better qualified to carry out the great idea of our University system. On that point, however, I cannot dwell here; but I am convinced that in the matter of tutorial supervision the large colleges must be more assimilated to the small ones before the tutors can really and honestly fulfil their true functions. No tutor should be allowed to have more than fifty pupils, at the outside; and the tutors need not be made to suffer by this arrangement, for there can be little doubt that Paterfamilias will not grudge paying £36 instead of £18 to ensure a thorough and conscientious guardianship, which will probably save him some hundreds by curtailing his son's extravagance.

The tutorial system, as it at present exists at the Universities, is a sham. Fond fathers and mothers at home are deluded into the idea that their sons are not only under strict supervision, but that they have the advantage of constant advice and help from a man qualified by experience to guide them, who combines in pleasant harmony the relations of a father and a friend; whereas, in fact,

young Hopeful is left to his own resources, and, so long as he keeps within the formal college rules, may drift into what extravagance or folly he pleases.

So much for culpable neglect on the part of Alma Mater; but I have a worse charge against her yet, and it is that of deliberately encouraging the extravagant expenditure which she ought to repress.

It is hardly possible, I think, to look impartially at University institutions without being struck with the thought that they are all painfully suggestive of a deliberate design to make money out of the undergraduate. After all, if we examine her closely, Alma Mater is only a Mrs. Squeers in a higher walk of life, and the University little more than a Dotheboys Hall on a grand scale. It is a venerable and respectable system of fleecing. College and town alike seem to recognize but one grand purpose in inviting the youth of England to their ancient seat of learning—to make as much money out of them as they possibly can, and by any means they can. Looking back upon Alma Mater now, with eyes opened pretty wide by experience, I can see written over shop and college alike the motto—

“Rem facias; si possis recte; si non
Quousque modo rem.”

And the result is unquestionably a success from *their* point of view.

There probably never was any instrument more ingeniously contrived for obtaining money under plausible but wholly incomprehensible pretences than a college bill. It would puzzle the oldest don in the college to explain all the items. As for poor Paterfamilias, he scratches his head, and looks distracted over them, as well he may. Young Hopeful, appealed to, supposes “it's all right. They keep up the old names for things, you know. Looks queer and quaint; but all right.” This is hardly satisfactory; and perhaps Paterfamilias ventures mildly to ask the tutor for an explanation. He is politely informed that they are the usual college payments, and with this delightfully vague assurance he has to remain content. Paterfamilias has such a profound respect for the venerable foundations of the University, that he would be horrified at the bare idea of instituting an inquiry to ascertain what is the origin of this black-mail, and what possible justification or excuse the college authorities can have for levying it

in this arbitrary fashion. If he attempted to do anything of the sort, he would have all don-dom down upon him at once, and would be crushed beneath a load of accumulated precedents. For probably even the most honest and conscientious don believes that immemorial custom has conferred a prescriptive right which overrules all objections on the score of original and intrinsic injustice and extortion.

It would seem, perhaps, to an outsider that the college, with its large revenues, might at least endeavour to supply the undergraduate with all necessary articles of food at moderate prices, and thus prevent him from resorting to tradesmen outside, whose charges are as exorbitant as their wares are generally inferior. But such a course has never commended itself to the college authorities, and consequently the prices charged by the college for provisions are to the full as exorbitant as those charged by the tradesmen outside—in some cases, even more so. To take dinners, for example. At my own college we paid just a trifle under two shillings—the exact amount, I think, was 1s. 10½d.—for a dinner which any ordinary eating-house would have supplied for eighteenpence. Fish, soup, and cheese were extras, which we could have by “sizing” for them—*i.e.*, paying kitchen prices. The most trifling relish was an extra, to be paid for accordingly. We were indeed supplied with “swipes” to wash down our plain joint and sweets; but this modest beverage was so abominably bad that we had invariably to “size” for college ale at twopence a glass, the price we should have paid for much better ale at one of Spiers and Pond’s refreshment bars. It is hardly wonderful that a third of the undergraduates at the colleges at least dined at hotels in the town, having to pay for their dinner in hall whether they dined or not. Now, I don’t mean to say that plain joints and sweets are not good enough for young lads of eighteen, but I do mean to say that the charge made for that frugal meal is excessive. The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple can afford to supply its students—of whom I suppose there do not dine daily one-fourth of the number of undergraduates who dine in the hall of my own college—with an excellent dinner, consisting of soup, fish, joints, sweets, cheese, beer, and wine, for the sum of two shillings a head. The mess of the Artillery cadets at Woolwich supplies a still

better dinner—not including wine, however—to 100 members at the rate of one shilling and sixpence a head. Soyer, the famous French cook, offered to contract with my own college to supply a better dinner than they now have for one shilling and fourpence a head; but the offer was refused, and the consequence is our head cook makes his £2,000 or £3,000 a year, and keeps his carriage and pair. The same exorbitant prices are charged for everything which the undergraduate has from the kitchens and butteries; though I am bound to say that the college, by a curious inconsistency, interferes to protect the undergraduate from his own rapacity by limiting the number and amount of his orders from the college kitchens, thus again driving him out among the tradesmen, who take their turn at fleecing him. I ask why undergraduates should be taxed so monstrously to fill the pockets of college parasites? Every college official, from the porter to the master, has his perquisites, in addition to a liberal salary which removes the least shadow of excuse for such perquisites. One ridiculous charge was—and unless lately abolished, is still—the charge of a halfpenny upon every letter delivered in college. In my time this was the perquisite of the head porter, who died during my residence, and left a fortune of nearly £15,000. Since then this black-mail is no longer a perquisite of the porter, who receives a fixed salary of £250 a year in lieu of these pickings. If the college chooses to take the delivery of the letters out of the hands of the regular postmen, I should like to know what right it has, therefore, to levy a fine of 50 per cent. upon every letter which an undergraduate receives.

Another most unreasonable impost is the fine for being out after ten o’clock at night. Every undergraduate who comes into college after ten is fined one penny, and after eleven, twopence. Yet by the rules of the college every student is permitted to be out till twelve. He is therefore committing no fault in being out after ten or eleven. Then why fine him? There is no question of discipline involved. Then why exact a fine for doing what the college openly countenances? It is the luckless Paterfamilias who has to pay all these fines, for they are not deducted from the undergraduate’s pocket money, as they ought to be if they are intended as a punishment; and it certainly is hard that poor Paterfamilias should

be called upon to provide perquisites for Heaven knows what college underling. Now, I ask any candid reader whether there is not enough in all this to justify a man in believing that the real end and purpose of University institutions is to extract money, by one pretence or another, from the unfortunate and helpless undergraduate—or rather, through him, from the still more unfortunate and helpless parent?

And the worst of it is that the dons, nurtured in this system, do not see its evils—simply because it never occurs to them to look upon things to which they are so accustomed as evils. There are many honest men in authority there who do their duty as well as the traditions of the place will allow them, but never dream of questioning the righteousness or the reasonableness of those traditions, although conscious of being cramped and hampered by them. They find themselves part of a venerable system, and they conform themselves to it—often gracing it with the lustre of their individual characters, and thereby unconsciously bolstering up its rottenness and corruption. For they are held up as the products of the system; and the public is asked whether a system which produces such men can possibly be as bad as its enemies represent it. Of course, the obvious answer to that argument is that these men are what they are, not because of the system, but in spite of it.

So much for the first half of my case against Alma Mater. If you think this exposure of some social evils at our Universities of sufficient interest to your readers, I will return to the subject in a future paper, and show how the preposterous and ruinous system of credit is fostered and kept alive, not only by the negligence, but by the indirect encouragement of the college authorities.

ASPHALTS.

AS the road named after Mr. MacAdam superseded the old roads of his time, so there can be no doubt the asphalt pavement will in the metropolis and in large towns before very long set on one side all other sorts of paving. The asphalt road has the following advantages: it is as hard as the granite paving in use in London before the introduction of the asphalt pavement; it is more durable, for at the end of from eight to ten years a granite

paved road is worn out, while the asphalt is still in good condition; its original cost is the same as that of a granite road; when worn out the granite has little value, while the asphalt can be used again either for road-making or for the production of mastic; above all, it has the advantage of being comparatively a noiseless, at the same time a perfectly smooth, road. These qualities are the chief recommendations for its use in large cities and towns. Added to this it is easily kept clean, as its surface is never muddy or "greasy," except with foreign matter; and if it is well washed with water at tolerably frequent intervals of time, this matter never has the opportunity to accumulate on the surface. It is already proved, on most indisputable evidence, that the asphalt road has these advantages. But its use is attended with the possibility of certain disadvantages. These are two. First, it is said that horses slip more on it than they do on the granite roads. Of course it is admitted they can find foothold infinitely better on the macadamised road than on any other form of roadway. At present, in London, the driver of horses in a vehicle has to contend against the difficulties of all sorts of pavements as he drives along the streets. He begins in the suburban districts on the macadam; he has a mile or two of this before his horses begin to slip and slide on the dry or "greasy" granite. When the granite road is wet, the foothold is very good. Off the granite they go on to the asphalt, and it is not to be wondered at that they slip about on the smooth surface of the new road.

But suppose granite to be done away with, and all the roads paved with asphalt, it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that the horses accustomed to this one kind of road would have a surer foothold on it, and likewise that a modification of the horse-shoe at present in use might be devised specially to suit the requirements of the asphalt. As it is, the shoe that is known to be good for the macadamised road has to do duty likewise on two other and most dissimilar kinds of road. It is denied, however, by the advocates of the asphalt pavement, that horses fall more on it than on the granite; and observations have been made in support of this statement in Paris, where the number of horses which were observed to fall in the Rue Neuve des Capucines during two months were as follows:—In

the former, which was paved with sandstone, in blocks, from Fontainebleau, one horse in 1,308 fell; on the latter, which was covered with asphalt, one in 1,409, so that the balance was in favour of the asphalt.

In snow or frost asphalt is not so slippery as granite, being in itself warmer, and also more easily warmed by the slightest rays of the sun; hence, the ice is more slow in forming and quicker in melting than on granite.

It has been proved that the greatest number of accidents to horses happen when the asphalt is not cleaned, for the surface is never muddy or greasy except with foreign matter, and this ought to be constantly washed off with water, which is plentifully laid on in Paris, and to some degree in London. At any points where this cannot be done, a slight sprinkling of coarse sand will prevent the horses slipping. This is, of course, only a temporary remedy, but valuable in case of emergency. It is one of the great advantages of asphalt, however, that it is so easily and cheaply cleaned.

The other danger said to be chargeable to the account of a general use of asphalt is that arising from its combustible nature. And the fires in Paris under the Commune, and at Chicago when a large part of that city was burnt, suggested the necessity of testing the amount of alleged incombustibility possessed by the asphalt, before using it largely in our great towns. It is said that during the Commune in Paris, in 1871, the fires commenced by incendiaries were never known to have been spread by means of the asphalt pavements. In London, experiments were made on this point by heaping wood on the Val de Travers pavement and setting fire to it. When the fire was at its fiercest, the burning embers were raked away, and only a few feeble flames were seen to issue from the pavement, and they went out directly of their own accord. In the stables of the Paris Omnibus Company the corn-loft is immediately over the stables, and in order to protect the corn against the effluvium from the stables, the floor of the loft was covered with a thick layer of the asphalt, and in five different conflagrations this floor arrested the course of the flames until help could be procured. And it has also been found that a wooden floor covered with asphalt was entirely protected against a fire which was lighted on

the asphalt; for although this material develops a volatile bitumen, which is inflammable, and another part of the bitumen escapes as gas, and burns accordingly, yet the mass of lime and coke which remains is sufficient to protect the wood against the flames. Also that during a conflagration in the works at Seyssel—owing to the bursting of a kettle of boiling tar—the asphalt floor turned the course of the fire; and when the wooden beams and walls were burnt, and the asphalt ceiling came down with a crash, it entirely extinguished the flames beneath.

Having regard, then, to the certain general use of asphalt roads in London, at all events before many years have passed, it is a matter of interest to inquire into the history and origin of the use of this bituminous substance for road-making. The most complete account of this very important material has been given in a pamphlet published not long since by Dr. L. Meyn, of Halle, part of which has been already translated into English. The translation appeared in the *Journal of the Society of Arts*. Dr. Meyn says that Eirinus, a Greek physician, was the first to make known in Europe the advantages of asphalt as a building material, in 1712, and he also discovered the existence of tar in Alsace in 1737. When visiting the Val de Travers (the chief valley running up into the Jura from the lake of Neufchâtel) on an official mission from the Bernese Government, in 1711, he met a German adventurer, named Jost, who, with some of his countrymen, had blasted some of the soft, tough, combustible rocks on the sides of the valley, and, finding them worthless as fuel, were trying in vain to find a use for them. Eirinus, who was interested in the subject, examined the rocky sides of the valley, and found that the same soft oily rocks protruded everywhere; he also discovered a rich bed in the neighbourhood of Blois de Croix, and comprehended at once its probable use and value.

He applied to the King of Prussia—under whose protection Neufchâtel was at that time—for a monopoly of all asphalt beds which he might discover in the principality of Neufchâtel. After due and careful inquiry, the King granted the request, and this concession was the origin of the asphalt trade.

In 1712, Eirinus commenced his works and experiments, and was able to interest

several sagacious and influential men in his undertaking, and to induce them to place various works under his direction to be executed in asphalt, the success of which brought the material into general notice and favour. Eirinus, however, did not benefit by his invention—a Swiss having succeeded in getting from him the particulars of his discoveries, and also obtaining a ten years' monopoly of the asphalt.

Dr. Meyn's researches lead him to suppose that Eirinus restored to the world a building material that had been lost for four thousand years, and observes—"We learn from the ancient authors that Babylon was partly built with asphalt, and from modern authors that an asphalt mortar was used for the walls of Nineveh. That used at Babylon was prepared with tar found near Is, on a tributary of the Euphrates. To what perfection Eirinus and his pupils carried the working of their new material is shown by a notice of the engineer, Henri Fournel, who mentions that in the house of a M. Coulin, in Couvet, one of the lovely villages of the Val de Travers, he found a flight of steps—which dates from this period—in which all the upper steps, which are of stone, are worn into holes; while the lower steps, which have been, of course, most used, being coated with asphalt, are almost entirely unimpaired."

It seems that the invention of Eirinus was made use of to a considerable extent, and that such use lasted over a long term of years, for Buffon mentions, in his "Natural History," that the basin of the large fountain in the Jardin des Plantes was covered with asphalt, and he was fully satisfied of its durability, as it was still water-tight after a lapse of thirty-six years. As this work was executed in 1743, the Val de Travers asphalt must have been still in request; but gradually it seems to have fallen into disuse, for in the year 1735 Eirinus had left the Val de Travers, and settled in Alsace, where, living in retirement, he discovered the asphalt at Lobsan. The quarries of the Val de Travers fell into private hands, who worked them more and more exclusively for the oil which was distilled from the asphalt, of which Eirinus also had taught the medicinal and commercial value; and so it happened that, at the beginning of the present century, the invention and the inventor were equally forgotten.

In proceeding to examine the various

kinds of pure bituminous substances found in nature, Dr. Meyn classifies them thus:—

- "1. Naphtha, or rock oil.
- "2. Petroleum.
- "3. Mineral tar, or maltha.
- "4. Mineral pitch, or asphalt.

"Naphtha—formerly called rock oil by apothecaries—an almost colourless fluid, with a bluish opal tint, and volatile at a temperature far below the boiling-point of water, is evidently the source of all other bitumens, in all of which it may be detected in the first stages of distillation. It is very rarely found in its pure state, except in the regions about the Caspian Sea. Usually it occurs in the crevices and interstices of porous stone, into which it has been condensed after the heat of the earth's surface has distilled it from the rocks which contained it.

"At first it was believed that naphtha was produced by the distillation of deeply-buried coals; but eventually the oil springs discovered underneath the coal formation led to the opinion that it was principally distilled from the animal organisms scattered through the rocks—in fact, the remains of countless ages of different animals. On this point, however, there are so many different opinions that it is unnecessary to enter further into it.

"Wherever a petroleum spring has emerged from the ground for any length of time, maltha or tar will be found near the surface, owing to the oxidation of the oil from exposure to the air. The springs may, in fact, be traced by the existence of the tar. Tar is almost invariably found impregnating a sandy stratum, very rarely in a pure state. A spring of tar has been discovered, however, in the old volcanic region about Clermont Ferrand, in France, which is rich in naphtha and tar in the sandstone rocks. As a rule, however, the oxidation of the petroleum has only been completed in the sand and loose sandstone, through the interstices of which the air can gain access to the oil.

"The asphalt stone consists of limestone, saturated—in the same way as the sand—with tar, the character of which differs only from that found in sand in appearing somewhat tougher; this may arise, however, from the fact that in the sand the tar covers only the separable grains, whilst in the limestone the smallest interstices are so completely

united, that heat and water are alike powerless to separate them.

"Nature has, however, rarely produced this substance, which is so valuable for industrial purposes. It is found in the greatest abundance and perfection in the Jurassic limestone in the Val de Travers, at Pyrmont, near Seyssel, on the Rhone, and the neighbouring localities, Volant and Chavaroche, where it is obtained by mining. In the same category may be included the bituminous limestone of the Alpine Lias mountains, near Seefeld, in Tyrol, the tertiary freshwater limestone of Lobsan, in Alsace; also the yellowish-white Jurassic limestone on the Dalmatic island of Brazza, whose dolomitic banks are saturated with 7 to 8 per cent. of bitumen to a depth of 12 feet, so that it might be quarried."

Many different ways of laying down the asphalt pavements have been tried with more or less success. But the final solution of the problem is due to the engineer, M. A. Merian, of Basle, who conceived the idea of laying down powdered asphalt in a warmed state on the street, and applying a strong pressure, so as to form at once an impermeable elastic surface. He tried the experiment on a part of the high road between Serrieres and Travers, with such success that, in spite of the insufficient foundation on which it was laid, that part of the road has remained unimpaired to this day.

The French engineers soon followed the example of M. Merian; and although they cannot dispute the right of the Swiss to the first invention, yet they claim for France the honour of having taken the lead in every useful application of asphalt.

We shall hail with much pleasure the substitution of the asphalt roads in London for those pitched with granite, as the comfort arising out of their permitting a great amount of traffic to proceed with the minimum of noise gives the new roads an immeasurable superiority over the old. The proof of the superiority of asphalt is to be found in the fact that wherever a street has been so paved in London, the inhabitants would mutiny if the granite were to be put down again in its old place.

A SPECIMEN OF LETTER-WRITING.

EDUCATION in this country is now making such rapid strides, that in the course of a few years, it may be pre-

sumed, there will not be any person arrived at years of discretion who cannot at the least read and write perfectly. Or, if such a desirable state of things as this is not actually attained to, a man who does not possess these acquirements will be looked upon as an utterly useless member of society. However excellent and desirable this condition may be, we shall thereby, at all events, miss one thing—namely, the sight of those marvellous specimens of writing, spelling, and modes of expression which are even now occasionally to be found among the epistolary and other effusions of the lower classes. These are seen now much less frequently than formerly—they will soon be altogether a thing of the past, and by our grandchildren will probably be looked upon as mere relics of a scarcely credible barbarism.

I am the fortunate possessor of a considerable number of these interesting manuscripts; but one fell into my hands the other day which for curiosity and originality surpasses any I have yet seen. Before giving the letter (such is the form of the writing in question) in extenso, a few words of explanation will be necessary.

The talented author of this document is a parishioner of a friend of mine who holds a very poor living in an important cathedral city. His parish is possessed of several charities of no inconsiderable value. Over these, as may be expected, the parishioners from time to time wrangle with some degree of acrimony. Last Christmas, when those charities were distributed according to custom, the parishioner alluded to, not receiving what he was pleased to consider himself justly entitled to, wrote the following indignant letter to his worthy rector:—

"DEAR SIR—I ad nothing to heat on Caismus I have always till this ad church money to gitt a diner i ham mutch obilged for your good promises beefore beapel but doant do it aney more The old wimen say you give me the 10 shilings and 4s but i never seit The wurd is to keep quiet and so I en what and starve with 3 shilings a weak of us i cant so much as git a cal tilket by kepen quiet young people in the st get over 40 shilneg weekley can have plenty i can tell you hoo some 4 and 5. At on time i hame a pawper and a poor cripl not able to ern a shiling now i think i have been in suspence long enuy i think then comes the

clark then guling me how I ham how meney
but see him no more i dont want no more
kidin on i would dy for want live in pity i
shall have to thank some in the paper some
dayshortley i am your most humbel obedent
servunt,
"G. HILLS."

As there may be several words and expressions in this singular production not altogether familiar to our readers, it might be interesting and instructive to them to append a translation of the same. It will be observed that in order that the sense may be complete many words have to be inserted, which are inclosed in brackets.

"DEAR SIR—I had nothing to eat on [at] Christmas. I have always, till this, had church-money [in order] to get a dinner. I am much obliged for your good promises before people, but don't do it any more. The old women say you gave me the ten shillings and [the] four shillings, but I never saw it. The word is to keep quiet [*i.e.*, they say that if we wish to reap any benefit from the charities, we must hold our tongues and not be always begging] and so I en [*en*—have done]. What! and starve with three shillings a-week for us? I cannot so much as get a coal-ticket by keeping quiet. Young people in the street get over forty shillings weekly; [they] can have plenty. I can tell you of some four or five at one time. [The peculiarity of the punctuation will doubtless be observed: the whole of the writer's energies in this direction seem to have been expended on a single full-stop, which occurs in the very middle of a sentence.] I am a pauper and a poor cripple not able to earn a shilling. Now I think I have been in suspense long enough (I think). Then comes the clerk gulling me [he asks me] how I am; how many [there are of us]. But [I will] see him no more. I don't want any more kidding on [*i.e.*, I don't require to be told what to do any more. The derivation of the word 'kidding' seems to be obscure.] I would die for want [although I] live in pity. I shall have to thank some in the paper shortly [this appears to be a piece of sarcasm].—I am, your most obedient humble servant, "G. HILLS."

We have no doubt our friend the "pawper" felt relieved after exercising his fertile faculties upon this strange epistle. Whether it produced the desired effect is not known;

it at least afforded amusement for the rector—let us hope it may serve the same end for our readers.

TABLE TALK.

THERE is a fresh outbreak of complaint among those fortunate persons who, having been decorated by foreign sovereigns, are unfortunately not allowed by the Foreign Office to wear their stars and ribands at home. The feelings of regret with which a gentleman, otherwise undecorated, parts from the emblems of distinction which he leaves in the drawer of his dressing-table when he goes to Court, can be imagined so easily that it is needless to describe them. But when we consider that he may wear his star and the riband of his order as much as ever he likes in the drawing-rooms of his acquaintance—in a word, that it is only in a royal palace that the Foreign Office prohibition can have any effect—we discover that, after all, his plight is not so sad as it seems to be at first. It is only reasonable that the Queen should exercise a right of prohibiting any form of dress she pleases in her own palaces, and all that remains is to obey or to stay away. No person can be mulcted of a penalty or thrown into prison for parading on his breast his foreign order. The Ministers of the Crown cannot "hurt a hair of his head" if he persists in covering himself in a blaze of the decorations so dear to his vanity; but they can cause the doors of the royal palaces to be closed against him. The gentleman distinguished by orders conferred upon him by continental princes, potentates, and powers, has hardly a grievance sufficiently hard to bear for it to enlist the sympathy of anybody outside his own immediate family circle, who, of course, are very much interested in seeing papa look nice when they go to a party—and, what is even more important, different in appearance to Mr. Brown and Mr. Robinson. The authorities at the Foreign Office are not likely to relax their stringent rules as to foreign decorations. These ornaments will not be permitted to be worn at Court, and it will be left to the "distinguished" in this way to continue to do what they have done for so long a time—wear their badges of honour at private entertainments, to the envy of all their "undistinguished" friends and acquaintance.

SOME VERY INTERESTING statistics have been put together for the information of those who are interested in the solvency of the different nations of the world. As will be seen from the subjoined table, Great Britain still has the honour to stand first on the list out of the seven nations of Europe which owe above one hundred millions of pounds each:—

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Great Britain | £790,000,000 |
| France | 748,000,000 |
| Italy | 360,000,000 |
| Russia | 355,000,000 |
| Austria | 306,000,000 |
| Spain | 261,000,000 |
| Turkey | 124,000,000 |

£2,944,000,000

Though France is only put down in the list for 748, it is calculated upon a different basis, and by a different authority, that she owes 960 millions. The small fry among nations, which owe only sums less than one hundred millions, includes—

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Holland | £80,000,000 |
| Portugal | 64,000,000 |
| Belgium | 27,000,000 |
| Greece | 18,000,000 |
| Roumania | 13,000,000 |
| Denmark | 12,000,000 |

£214,000,000

While on the American continent the following is said to be the state of indebtedness:—

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| United States | £433,000,000 |
| Brazil | 67,000,000 |
| Canada | 21,000,000 |
| Argentine Republic | 16,000,000 |
| Venezuela | 14,000,000 |
| Peru | 12,000,000 |
| Mexico | 10,000,000 |

£573,000,000

And as a total, the public debts of the five quarters of the globe—if we may use that Irish form of expression—are:—

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Europe | £3,400,000,000 |
| America | 573,000,000 |
| Asia | 135,000,000 |
| Africa | 39,000,000 |
| Australasia | 38,000,000 |

£4,185,000,000

Though we know the fallaciousness attaching to round numbers, and have always a suspicion of the correctness of these great totals, yet it is only in some such tabulated form that we can arrive at even a tolerably correct estimate of how matters stand where large figures are concerned. The moral pointed to would seem to be that Great Britain ought to follow the good example set her by the United States, and begin, at all events, to think seriously of paying off her national debt at a somewhat faster rate than she has been doing at any period of her history since she first began to contract it.

HERR WAGNER and his doings at Bayreuth interest the musical world in England as much almost as they do that of Germany. The Bayreuth enterprise will be started with great éclat. It has the patronage both of the Emperor of Germany and of the King of Bavaria, and the composer of "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin" ought to be as happy as a poet and musician can reasonably expect to be in an imperfect world. He has triumphed over the opposition of his enemies—he is to have a theatre built expressly for him to produce his series of operas for the Bayreuth Festival, whilst concerts of Wagner music are given, and subscriptions for seats at the Bayreuth celebration flow in from musical amateurs who, living out of Germany, yet admire the genius of this extraordinary composer. The effect of this expression of opinion on the part of the musical public ought to be to induce Mr. Gye and Mr. Mapleson to give some of Wagner's latest operas at Covent Garden and Drury Lane this season, where as yet they have not been heard. At present, if Wagner's music is heard in London at all, it is heard at a concert, and justice cannot be done to it except in connection with dramatic representation. We believe that the managers of our opera houses would find a late work of Wagner's remunerative to a greater degree than the production of those well-worn strains we have heard so often. Every lover of music in London wishes to hear this wonderful German's music in its proper place on the lyric stage.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W.C.

ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 272.

March 15, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A Fable.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXV.



SOME of my readers—I am writing for both worlds—have very likely been hanged. They will remember that on the morning of the day for which this unpleasant operation—surrounded by everything most likely to increase the unavoidable discomfort—was fixed, they slept sweetly and soundly, awaking early in the morning with dreams of childhood's innocence. This was the case with Philip on the morning after all this disaster had fallen upon him. He awoke at twelve, from a dream of perfect peace and happiness—awoke smiling and at rest. Suddenly, the thought of all his misery fell upon him, and he started up, wide awake and wretched. He could not lie any longer,

but got up, dressing hurriedly and nervously. All, everything gone: more than all. Dishonour before him and ruin already upon him. In this evil plight, what to do? He thought of Arthur; but he could not bear to go and tell him, his younger brother, the story of his ruin. And then he looked back and saw with what fatal folly he had gone deeper and deeper, hoping against hope, living in the fool's paradise of a gambler.

He went downstairs, and found Laura, fresh and bright, reading quietly in the window. She looked up, rang the bell, and sat down again. No word of welcome for him, none of reproach; for, as her husband grew colder, the young wife retreated more and more within herself. Laura's face has changed in the last three months. The old look has passed away, and another has taken its place. It is a sad expression, an expression of thought and reflection, that sits upon her face. She has found out her great and terrible fault. Between herself and Philip there is nothing in common; and she trembles, thinking of the future that lies before, and a life spent as these last three months have been. For she has no friends, no visitors, no acquaintance. No one but Philip and Mr. MacIntyre ever speaks to her. She is alone in the world. And yet she knows, in her heart, that there is one friend to whom she may go, with whom she will find forgiveness. Of that she is certain. Philip's breakfast was brought up. He sat down, exasperated with himself, with his wife because she took no notice of him, with everything. He poured out a cup of tea, and looked at it. Then he broke into a fit of irrepressible wrath.

"Damn it all," he said, "the tea is cold."

His wife looked at him in surprise. It was the first time he had ever lost his temper before her.

"Philip! Why, it is just made."

To prove his words, he tasted it, and scalded his lips. Then he pushed the tray

back, swearing again. Laura watched him with astonishment.

"I will have no tea and trash. Give me some brandy."

"Not in the morning. Philip, you are very strange. Are you ill?"

He went to the cellaret and helped himself, saying nothing.

Just then the maid came, bearing a small blue paper—a missive from the butcher.

"Philip, give me four pounds, please. The man wants his money."

"I have no money."

"Mary, tell the butcher to call again tomorrow," Laura said, flushing with shame. "What has gone wrong, Philip?"

"Nothing. If there were, you would not care—you would not understand. Do you care anything at all for what concerns me? Have you ever cared?"

"At least, I may know if it is anything in which I can help."

"You cannot help. You can only make things worse. If you loved me, you might. But there, what is the use of talking?"

She was looking quite coldly in his face. Love?—of course she had never loved him. But why—why did not conscience, who so often slumbers when she ought to be awake and at work—why did not conscience remind him then, even then, of all the girl had given to him, and all of which he had robbed her? He might have remembered her sweet and innocent trust; the confidence which came from perfect purity of soul; the nights when he had awakened, her head upon his breast, his arms round her neck, to listen to her sweet breath rise and fall, to catch the murmur of her dreams; and, for very shame's sake, he might have thought of the friend from whom he had torn her—the disgraceful lies and deceits with which he had surrounded her. But he thought of none of these things. He thought only that, at all risks and hazards, this at least must be put an end to.

"What is it, Philip?" she asked, with frightened eyes.

"I have been thinking," he said, looking on the carpet, and lighting a cigar with trembling fingers, "for some time, that we should come to an understanding."

"What about?"

"About everything—our marriage especially."

I believe that when he got up that morning nothing was farther from his thoughts

than this villainy. But a drowning man catches at a straw; and the ruined man saw that by getting rid of Laura he should at least be free to act. The power of impecuniosity to make men do vile and abominable things has never been properly stated by poet or novelist. In the Lord's Prayer, after the petitions for bread and forgiveness, comes the equally important one that we may not be led into temptation—amongst other things, by an empty purse.

Laura suspected nothing—understood nothing.

"I told you two months ago, Laura, that perhaps you might, some time or other, make another attempt to recover Mr. Venn's friendship. I think the time has come."

"I may write to him, Philip? You mean it?—you really mean it?"

"I think I would not write to him, if I were you, because you might mislead him on one or two important points. I think you had better go and see him."

"Mislead him? How ~~am~~ I to mislead him?"

He looked up, and ~~met~~ the clear, deep eyes of his wife, and his own fell. His voice grew husky.

"When you met me—that is, when I took you to the lodgings of the man in Keppel-street—"

"Where we were married?"

"Where, Laura—there is no use hiding things any longer—where the man pretended to marry us."

She looked full at him, unable to take in, all at once, the whole force of his words.

Philip, the fatal shot once fired, felt emboldened to proceed. But he was very pale.

"MacIntyre was not a properly qualified clergyman. He had no power to marry us. He says he is a clergyman of the Scotch Church. If that is any consolation to you, believe it. The man is an accomplished liar; but he may sometimes speak the truth. We are no more married, Laura, than if we had never met."

"You knew this all along, Mr. Durnford?"

"All along. I should have married you regularly, because I was so infatuated with your beauty; but you insisted on being married on that particular Wednesday or no other. It was not altogether my fault. I thought that perhaps—"

"Yes," said Laura, sitting down.

Neither spoke for a space. The cigar went out between Philip's lips, and these trembled and shook. His face was white, with a look of terror: a man might have it when he suddenly realizes that all the nobleness has gone out of him.

Presently, he moved forward a step. She started back, crying—

"Don't touch me—don't come near me!"

"Laura, in spite of your coldness—for you have never loved me as I once loved you—I should have kept this secret, but for one thing. I am utterly ruined. I not only have no money, but I owe hundreds of pounds more than I can pay, and I shall be a dishonoured man. I must leave the country if I cannot raise the money. We must part."

"Yes," said the girl, "we must part. Why did we ever meet? By what cruel mockery of fate did you ever cross my path? Part! Man, if you were to touch me, if I were to feel your breath upon me, I should die. You, who for five months have lived with this shameful lie upon your conscience—you who called yourself gentleman—you who mocked at the poor man's sins and sufferings—you! Is every gentleman like this?"

He did not answer, looking down upon the hearth-rug. There were, then, some remains of shame upon him.

Laura poured out a glass of water and drank it. Then she took off her wedding ring, kissed it, and laid it gently on the table.

"Holy symbol," she said, "I must not wear you any longer. Why did you find me out to ruin me, Mr. Philip Durnford? Are there not enough poor women crying in the world, but you must bring sorrow and shame to another? And—and—oh, God! is Heaven so full that there is no room in it for me?"

Then she turned upon him like a tigress, so that he shrank back and cowered.

"You, for whom I have prayed night and morning. You, that I thought all nobleness and honour; so that I laid bare all the secrets of my soul to you, and told everything that was in my heart. I am ashamed when I think that I have so talked with you. I am more ashamed of this than of anything. And, oh! what will Mr. Venn say when I go back to him, and tell him all the shameful story? How shall I tell it him—how shall I tell it him? Philip Durnford, keep out of his way, and tell that other man,

your accomplice, to keep out of his way and hide himself, or it may be worse for him. I don't want any punishment to fall on you, except—I suppose, God does sometimes make wicked people feel their wickedness. But nothing can make their victims again as they have been. When your turn comes, Philip, when you go from bad to worse—when you find yourself at last upon your death-bed, with *this* behind you, you will think of me—you will think of me."

Philip was a little recovered by this time.

"Of course," he said, lightly, "I expected a little unpleasantness at first. You will see, when we get older, that I really could not act otherwise."

"As a gentleman—no."

"I will not be irritated," he went on, being now as calm as if he were doing a virtuous action—"I will not be irritated. The sale of this furniture——"

"Thank you—you are thoughtful."

Then she left him, and went to her own room, where she locked the door and threw herself upon the bed.

Philip, left alone, wiped his forehead and breathed more freely. One source of expense was gone, at any rate. There was comfort in that thought—a ray of sunshine in the tempest of his mind. As for what might be said or thought of him, he was profoundly indifferent. Only, it occurred to him that the news might have been broken in a different manner, less abruptly, through a third person, by letter. However, it was done, and nothing could undo it. Misfortune to some men is a kind of Ithuriel's spear—it reveals the real nature of a man—

"No falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to his own likeness."

Then the brave man becomes a coward, the large-hearted man mean, the godly man ungodly, the virtuous man vicious, the noble a *lâche*. The women of the family generally have the best opportunities of finding out the truth; but they cover it up, hide it, and go about flaunting their colours of loyalty to the great and good man whom all the world admires; and, after the first agony of shame, fall into that cynicism which sits so ill on woman's nature. As for the men, I think their thoughts may arrange themselves in the form of a Collect, a prayer for every morning of the year, as thus: "Lord, the helper of sinners, as well

as of saints, let not the smugness of our reputation ever decrease; but replenish us, above all things, with the bulwarks of wealth and honour, so that the virtues with which we are credited may never be called into exercise." And there are some—Philip Durnford was one—who deliberately believe themselves to be chivalrous, delicately honourable, brave, manly, and great, though all the time every thought and every action might go to prove the contrary. The mirror in which men see themselves—what we call conscience—is distorted; and while the real man performs duties and absurdities in folly and sin, the mirror shows another Sir Galahad, marching with lofty crest along the narrow path of honour, while in the sunshine glow the battlements which guard the Holy Grail.

Such was Philip in his mirror. All of a sudden, when Laura left him, there was an instant flash of lightning in his soul which showed him a thing he was never to forget, the real creature he was. No Sir Galahad, but a mopping and mowing antic, crawling ignobly down the slope of Avernus. He started to his feet, and stood for a moment staring into space. Then he seized the brandy bottle, and drank a wineglassful; and, behold, Sir Galahad again!—only with a sort of blurr and haze around his noble form, evermore to grow more blurred as the memory of this guilt eats into his soul. Perhaps this illusory image will some day be wholly gone, and his real self be seen with clearer eyes. Then may he cry aloud to be delivered from the body of this death, and God's punishment be upon him—the punishment of forgiveness. Is there no punishment in repentance and self-abasement? Cannot revenge itself be satiated when the sinner is prostrate, crying, from shame and remorse, "Lord, I have sinned—I have sinned."

Laura, in her bed-room, sat silent for a while, trying to think. Then she fell upon her knees and tried to pray; but no words came. Only as she knelt a thought came across her soul, which was, perhaps, the answer to her prayer. For she arose swiftly, and began to undress herself. Everything that she had on she tore off and threw from her, as if it had been a shirt of Nessus. Her earrings, her jewels, the cross round her neck, she laid on the table; and put with them her watch and chain, all her

little trinkets—all but a single little cross with a black ribbon, which she laid aside, for Mr. Venn had given it to her. And then she opened all her drawers, took out the contents—the trousseau that Philip had given her—piled them all in a heap, and trampled on them with her bare little feet. And then, out of the lowest division, she took the dress she had worn when she was married: all that she had on that day was lying folded together, even to the stockings and the little boots. She put them on hurriedly: the dress of blue merino stuff; the little hat with an ostrich feather, Mr. Venn's last gift; the ivory cross and the locket he had given her; the brown cloth jacket; the belt with the great steel buckle; and the new pair of gloves—the last she had received from him. In the pocket of her dress was her purse, and in it two pounds—Mr. Venn's two pounds.

Then she took her jewel-case, placed in it all the things that Philip had given her, and descended the stairs. He was sitting there, just as she had left him half an hour before: her handsome husband, her knight, and lord, and king. He for whom she had left the noblest of friends, to cleave to him. All the nobleness was gone out of his face. As she looked on him, she wondered where it had been; and she pitied him—yes, she pitied him, for his baseness.

He looked up, and made a motion with his lips as if he would speak; but no words came. She placed the jewel-case on the table gently.

"You will find my dresses upstairs, Mr. Durnford. You can sell them for something, I dare say. I am come to return you your other presents. There is the watch you gave me at Vieuxcamp, with a pretty speech about its lasting as long as your love—you remember it, I dare say. Here is the chain. You said that love's fetters were all golden. It was a very pretty thing to say, was it not? Here are the bracelets, and all the rest. They will do for your next victim.

"After the next mock marriage, try to undeceive her a little less suddenly and harshly. Let her know it in some way a little different to this.

"I wish you had died first, Philip. I wish you were lying dead at my feet, and that I were crying over your dead body, believing you to be good and true. Now there is nothing to lament. But how much worse

for both of us! The last memory I shall carry away with me is of a coward and a liar. A gentleman! Look in the glass, at your own face."

It was now, though she did not know this, the face of a negro, with protruding lips, lowering eyebrows, and black cheeks.

"Have you more to say?" asked Philip, hoarsely.

"I go as I came," she said. "Whatever I brought with me I take away, but nothing more. Stay, this is my own pen-knife."

She took a little white-handled thing from the inkstand, and put it into her pocket. It was the slightest action in the world, but it wrung Philip's heart as nothing yet had wrung it.

"Now there is nothing left to remind you of me," she said. "Mr. Venn will help me. I go back to him."

He did not speak.

"Farewell, Philip."

She turned to go. As she touched the handle of the door, her husband fell forward on his knees before her, and caught her by the hands, with tears and sobs.

"Laura, Laura!" he cried, "forgive me. All shall be as it was. We will be married again. Forgive me, Laura. I am mad this morning. Only stay——"

But she slipped from him, and was gone.

After all, the memory of her husband was not altogether that of the hardened wretch she might have thought him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ABOUT two o'clock Mr. MacIntyre called upon his patron, and found him in a state of mental irritation which indicated the necessity of prudence and tact. He was sitting where Laura had left him, glowering over the fire—her bracelets and trinkets on the table; and the black cloud upon his face, with this disorder, was quite sufficient to teach the student of human nature that something had happened. A curious phrase this—if we may be allowed a digression. It surely indicates a strong belief in the malignity of fate, when the phrase, "something has happened," means misfortune; as if nothing was ever given unexpectedly except kicks and buffets. So far as my own experience goes, the voice of the people is right.

Mr. MacIntyre assumed an expression designed to illustrate the profound sympathy

working in his breast, took off his hat, and sat down in silence.

"What's the matter, Phil?" After a pause.

Philip made an impatient gesture.

"Mrs. Durnford——"

"Damnation!" cried Philip, starting to his feet, and walking backwards and forwards.

Mr. MacIntyre was silent. Presently, preserving the same sympathetic look, he rose, and moving softly—after the manner of one who respects trouble—he proceeded to the well-known cellaret, whence he drew a decanter of sherry. Helping himself to a glass, he drank it off with a deep sigh. Then he shook his head solemnly, and offered the decanter to Philip.

"Drink!" he cried. "It is all you think of. Is there a misfortune in the world that you would not try to cure with drink?"

"None," said MacIntyre—"I think there is none. Drink makes a man forget everything. But what is it, Philip? What has happened?"

"Why have you not been near me for a week?"

"Because I have been busy about my own affairs. What *has* happened, then?"

"I have been losing about as fast as a man could lose for seven or eight weeks——"

"Eh, man! luck will——"

"I have no luck but the devil's, I suppose. Listen: you blew the spark into a flame—you and your wonderful secret were at the beginning of it. 'The mighty lever that can make us meellionaires.' You recollect?"

"I can't but say I do."

"Well, the lever's broke into little bits, that's all. I owe more hundreds than I can tell you over what I can pay. I have not bothered to add up the sum total of the book over the Houghton meeting. I can tell you this, though: before Kingdon I had forty-seven creditors; now, I suppose, I've got three or four more. They'd like to meet me, I have not the least doubt. They won't. I'm scratched for all my engagements. Broken down badly. It is not one leg in my case, it's all four."

He laughed. His mind was easier since the anxiety of how he should find the money to pay with had been removed. He had decided not to pay; been desperate and gambled without much hope of paying; come off second best at the game, and had

not paid. His desperation had brought some sort of relief with it. Only the reckless man can laugh as he did. Mr. MacIntyre, now many degrees removed from the feeling of recklessness, saw no cause for making merry, and opened his eyes as wide as it was possible to do, putting on his most sympathizing mask, at the same time that he ejaculated a pious—"Hear that now!" as his young friend's narrative proceeded.

"See there," Philip continued, tossing his betting-book across the table to Mr. MacIntyre, "turn over the pages and satisfy yourself. There is a line scored through the wins. You won't find many. I backed fifteen horses in the last two days at Newmarket without scoring one win."

"I doubt," said Mr. MacIntyre, shaking his head and handing back the book—"I doubt you did not keep to the seestem. Ah, now——"

"I did not. Nobody ever did keep to a system. They mean to at the start, but they forget they even meant till they come to add up a losing account. I thought when you saw what a succession of facers backers have had, you would have guessed what was the matter."

Here he picked up a newspaper a week old, and read—"The complaints of absent accounts were loud and deep, and no wonder. Even bookmakers don't like to be shot at; and two noble lords, besides a baker's dozen of 'untitled noblemen,' have gone in the last few weeks."

"'Untitled noblemen,' MacIntyre, that's for me. After that awful Monday came I was frightened at my own shadow for a few days, and hardly dared to look into the paper of a morning. I expected to find my name at the head of the sporting intelligence, or in the agony column with the people wanted. They don't do that, I find; but one fellow has written—after calling about twenty times at the club—to say he shall post me at Tattersall's. Much I care if he does. It will be a poste restante, but I am not likely to be called for."

"Ye don't know that," said MacIntyre, wisely wagging his head.

"I do," said Philip, with his bitter, scornful, hollow laugh. "All is lost—honour, money, all. If I raked together everything I have in the world, I don't suppose I should be able to pay a shilling in the pound. But this is not all. I've had another loss," he went on. "I told that

girl the whole truth, and she has left me."

"Is she gone? I am sorry," said MacIntyre. "I've always been vera sorry for the poor little bonnie thing."

"She is gone, and will never come back to me. So that is finished. Let us talk about other things. I suppose, MacIntyre, that the marriage was all a farce?"

The reverend gentleman took two bits of paper—the famous marriage certificates—from his pocket-book, and handed them to Philip.

"The mock certificates," he said. "Yes, Philip, you can do what you like with them. Best tear them up."

Philip threw them into the fire.

"But you told me —"

"Eh, now? Don't let us have a bletherin' about what I told you. You were in one of your moral moods that day, you see; and I always suit my conversation to circumstances. I just thought it best to make the most of what we did. Perhaps I never was an ordained clergyman at all. Perhaps I pretended. I have preached though, on probation. It was at Glasgie. They said I wanted Uncion. Eh, sirs, what a man I might have been, with Uncion!"

Philip took him by the shoulders, and held him at arm's length.

"MacIntyre, you are a precious scoundrel. I am bad enough, God knows; but not so bad as you. I have the strongest desire at this moment to take you by the throat and throttle the life out of you."

The philosopher looked up for one moment in alarm, but speedily smiled again.

"You will not, Phil. First, because it would be murder, and you would not like being hanged. Second, because you would not be such a fool as to hurt the only man who has it in his power to help you."

"You!"

"And third, because your wrath is like a fire of chips. It burns out as soon as it is lighted."

Philip let him go.

"If you are the only man to help me, why the devil don't you, instead of drinking sherry and telling me what a liar you are?"

"I'm going to," said the little man, sitting down with an air of great dignity, and beginning to tremble, because he was at last going to play his great card. "I'm going to. Sit down, Phil, and listen. Let us first face the position. What is it?"

"Ruin and disgrace."

"For want of a few hundreds, which I will put into your hand at once, with plenty more to the back of them."

"Go on, man. Are there any more lies at the bottom of all this?"

"Do not pain me unnecessarily, Philip. You will be sorry, afterwards. This is a very grave and serious matter. Do you remember a conversation I had with you after your father's death?"

"I do."

"I hinted then at the possession of certain documents, which might or might not be found useful in proving you the heir to certain property."

"Go on, MacIntyre. Do get on faster."

"I afterwards obtained those proofs. During all the years of my wandering, I have kept them reelegiously in my pocket-book, in the hope that they might one day be of use in restoring you, my favourite pupil, to your own."

He dropped his voice from nervousness. Suppose, after all, the plan should fail? It seemed to Philip that his accents trembled with emotion.

"The papers prove you beyond a doubt—I mean, mind, beyond a legal doubt—to be the sole heir of your father's property, the estate of Fontainebleau, in the Island of Palmiste."

"Arthur's estate! I will not believe it."

"Do not, if you prefer to believe the contrary. It brings in, at present, about £4,000 per annum, clear profit, in good years. There is not a mortgage on it, and it is managed by the most honest man in all the island. Philip, I offer you this—not in an illegal way, not in any way of which you will hereafter be ashamed, but as a right, your right. I offer you fortune, escape from all your troubles, and, Philip—not the least—I offer you legitimacy."

"The proofs, MacIntyre—the proofs."

"Wait, wait. First read and sign this document. It is a secret agreement. It is not possible to receive the sum named by any legal procedure—I trust entirely to your honour. And if you do not obtain the estate, the agreement is not worth the paper it is written on."

Philip read it. It was a paper in which he pledged himself to hand over to MacIntyre, as soon as he got the Fontainebleau estate, the sum of £5,000.

"It will be a cruel thing to turn out Arthur," he said.

"You can settle with all your creditors," said MacIntyre, significantly.

"At the worst, I can but starve," said Philip.

"Hoots toots!" said the philosopher. "I've tried it: you would not like it. Of course you will not starve. Sign the paper, and we will proceed."

Philip took a pen, signed it, and tossed it back.

MacIntyre folded the document, and carefully replaced it in his pocket-book. Then he took out three or four papers, wrapped in a waterproof cover. They were clean enough, though frayed at the edges, and the ink was yellow with age. He handed them solemnly to Philip. Three of them were letters written by George Durnford, beginning "My dearest wife," and ending with "Your most affectionate husband, George Durnford."

"Obsairve," said Mr. MacIntyre. "The dates of all are *before* that of his marriage with Mdlle. Adrienne de Rosnay. The letters themselves are not sufficient. Look at this."

It was a certificate of marriage between George Durnford and Marie—no other name.

"And this."

The last paper purported to be a copy of a marriage register from the Roman Catholic chaplain of St. Joseph. To it was appended a statement to the effect that the marriage had been privately solemnized in Mr. Durnford's house, but that the register was duly entered in the church-book.

Philip's eyes flashed.

"If you had told me that you were yourself the Roman Catholic priest, I should not have believed you. MacIntyre, if those papers are what they pretend to be, I am a legitimate son."

"Of course you are. I've known it all along. But I waited my opportunity."

"Who are the witnesses to the marriage?" asked Philip.

"See those signatures. I am one. I was present on the occasion. The other is Adolphe, brother to Marie the bride. The clergyman is dead, and I suppose the other witness, by this time. But you can inquire in Palmiste, if you like. The ways of what we call Providence are obscure. They may appear to be winding. They are, in reality, straight."

Philip made an impatient gesture, and he stopped.

Mr. MacIntyre had played his last card, his King of Trumps, and it looked like winning. He breathed more easily.

"I believe, MacIntyre," said Philip, coolly, "that there is not a single thing in the world that you would not do for money."

"There is not," replied the tutor, with readiness. "There is nothing. And why not? I look round, and see all men engaged in the pursuit of wealth. They have but one thought, to make money. I, too, have been possessed, all my life, with an ardent desire to be rich. But fortune has persecuted me. Ill-luck has dogged me in all that I have tried. I am past fifty now, and have but a few years to live. To have a large fortune would bring with it no enjoyment that I any longer greatly care for. But to have a small one would mean ease, respectability, comfort for my declining years, nurses to smooth my pillow, considerate friends. This is what I want. This is what you will give me. I have looked for it all these years, and bided my time. With my five thousand pounds, which is two hundred and fifty pounds a year, I shall go to some quiet country place, and live in comfort. My antecedents will be unknown. I shall be Respectable at last."

The prospect was too much for him, philosopher that he was. He went on, in an agitated voice, walking up and down the room—

"Money! Is there anything in the world that money will not procure? Is it friends? You can get them by the bribe of a dinner. Is it love? You can buy the semblance, and win the substance. Is it honour? You can buy that too, if you have got enough money. Is it power? Money is synonymous with power. Is it comfort? Only money will buy it. Is it health? You may win it back by money. Is it independence? You cannot have it without money. Money is the provider of all."

"It won't help you to get to Heaven."

"I beg your pardon. Without it, I am—I am damned if you will get to Heaven."

"A curiously involved expression," said Philip, looking at the man with astonishment.

"Answer me this, Phil. Did you ever hear of a poor man repenting, unless it was when he was going to be hanged?"

"I really have not given the subject any consideration."

"You never did. It is only the rich who have leisure to repent. What is a poor man to think about but the chance of to-morrow's dinner? Great heavens, Phil! when I think of how wretchedly, miserably, detestably poor my life has been, my wonder is, not that my life has been so bad, but that it has not been worse. Do you know what grinding poverty is? Do you know what it is to be a poor student at a Scotch University? Do you know what it means to take up a sacred profession which you are not fit for—to disgrace yourself and lose self-respect before you are five and twenty—to be put to a thousand shifts—to invent a hundred dodges—to lose your dignity as a man—to be a parasite, and fail in that—to take to drink because the years of your manhood are slipping by, and a miserable old age is before you? Tell me, can you guess what all these things mean? Youth! I had no youth. It was wasted in study and poverty. I dreamed of love and the graces of life. None came to me. No woman has ever loved me. Not one. I have always been too poor even to dream of love. Philip, I like you for one reason. You have kicked me like a dog. You have called me names. You despise me. But you and I are alike in this, that we owe the world a grudge. I rejoiced when I saw you ruining yourself. I stood by at the last and let it go on, because I knew that every hundred pounds you threw away brought me nearer to my end. And that is the five thousand pounds that you will give me."

Philip said nothing. He saw in part what this man was whom he had believed to be a simple, common rogue; saw him as he was—pertinacious, designing, cynically unscrupulous. He recoiled before a nature stronger than his own, and felt abashed.

"The money," MacIntyre went on, "will not come a bit too soon. I am nearly at the end of the hundred pounds I had. Arthur told me I should have another fifty, and then no more. What should I do when that was gone? You remember what I was when you met me in the streets?—a poor, famished creature, on one-and-threepence a day. A few more weeks would have finished me. Even now the effects of that bitter winter are on me, and I wake at night with the terror upon me that those days are coming back—that I shall have to return to the twopenny breakfast, and the fourpenny dinner, and the miserable lodging

where I sat at night, gloomy and drinkless. Money! He asks me if I would do anything for money! I, with my memories! Philip, I swear there is no act of dishonesty I would not commit to save myself from this awful dread of destitution that hangs over me day and night. After my miserable life, compensation is due to me. I say, sir, it is due." His face grew black and lowering. "If I am not paid what is owing to me, I shall take what I can get. For the forced hypocrisies of my youth, for my servile manhood, for my ill fortune, my wretched condition of last year, I swear that compensation is due to me. Honesty? The wise man guides himself by circumstances. Well, I've prayed—yes, you may laugh, but I have prayed till my knees were stiff—for some measure, even the smallest, of success in the world, for just a little of that material comfort which makes life tolerable. As well pray for the years to roll back as for fate to be changed. Whatever I do henceforth, I claim as my right. It is my compensation for the sufferings of the past."

He sat down. Philip noticed how shaky he was, how his legs tottered and the perspiration stood in great beads upon his nose—the feature where emotion generally first showed itself with this philosopher. But he answered him not a word.

"Go now," he said, "and show these papers to Arthur. He ought to see them."

MacIntyre put on his hat.

"Don't come back here," said Philip. "Find me at the club. I should choke if I slept a night in this house."

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—VI.

THE next evening, when seated round the fire, we called on Pat for a tale, as it was his turn to try and amuse us.

"I do not at this moment remember anything which happened to myself to tell you," he said; "but, if you like, I can tell you something I heard long ago."

"We are not particular," replied Bill Walker, "nor difficult to please, you know; and will be very thankful to you for anything that will keep us awake for an hour or two."

"I do not think I can do better than tell you a yarn I heard from a Victorian man some years ago, which I have every reason to believe to be true, and which made such

an impression on me that I think I can repeat it, nearly word for word, as he told it to me. The tale you told us, Stevens, a night or two ago, recalled it to my memory, although, excepting that bushrangers figure in it, there is no similarity."

"Drive on, then, old chap," said Charlie, "and let us have it."

"Well, then," said Pat, "I will tell it to you as nearly as possible in the words it was told in to me, first telling you that the fellow's name who told it to me was Flaxman."

Clearing his throat, he began as follows:—

A TALE OF THE BLACK FOREST.

It is nearly twenty years ago since what I am about to relate took place—to me it seems like so many hours—and the memory of it is now as fresh and vivid to my mind as if it had happened yesterday. Often during my lonely rides through the dark, gloomy forest, or when lying by the camp fire watching the bright sparks flying upwards towards heaven, and listening to the melancholy howl of the native dog, in fancy I see the sweet, gentle face of Alice Griffiths, so soft and womanly in its every expression, with nothing to indicate her courage and resolution excepting a certain fire in her eyes, only seen then in her rare moments of deep and intense excitement. Then those lustrous eyes, so loving and winning in their fathomless depth, would blaze with a light almost fierce in its grandeur, as sudden in its coming as in its going, betraying an unexpected strength of character more akin to the daring determination of a bold man, quick of action and ready in emergency, than to the yielding nature of a simple girl, trusting to and dependent on others in moments of extreme danger. Rather tall, slightly and elegantly formed, very girlish in both manners and disposition, with what is so seldom seen together—dark blue eyes and fair golden hair, a clear, bright complexion, and a mouth perfectly bewitching in its loveliness—she had the beauty and grace of a Madonna, combined, as you will hear, with courage and presence of mind to an extent I never met with in any other woman, and of which any man might have been justly proud. She and her brother Arthur lived together on a station not very far from Kilmore, but in rather an unfrequented part of the country at that time. Their home-station was beau-

tifully, almost romantically situated. In front, a wide creek twisted and turned through a clear open flat of about half a mile in width, its course marked by the foliage of many a stately gum tree, and here and there clumps of wattle trees, dark in their winter beauty, but gay and bright when clad in their brilliant summer blossoms. At the back, within a few yards of the house, a black, dense forest of stringy bark trees frowned on the lovely scene in front, like some evil genii scowling on a lovely Peri. Alice had a great love of flowers, and, with much care and a considerable display of taste, had formed a beautiful little garden, taking advantage of every natural beauty the place possessed. Little beds of flowers were prettily laid out, and a large charred and withered gum tree was made to do duty and contribute to the picture by spreading out its long limbs to be covered with green-leaved and gay, bright-blossomed creepers.

A large paddock for horses adjoined the garden. In a corner of it was the stockyard, having slip rails opening into the paddock; and into this the horses were driven when any were wanted. There was no stable—they were not so common twenty years ago as they are now.

At that time a gang of bushrangers was roving about Victoria, robbing every one they met, and often murdering their victims when they did not get any money from them. It was this gang of which the following tale is told:—A settler, called J. H. P., was stopped several times; but, being rather a cute fellow, the bushrangers never got more than a few shillings from him. This constant disappointment so enraged them, that they told him that if they ever caught him without money again—and plenty, too—they would tie him to a tree, and burn him alive. I suppose, either he took care to carry a well-filled purse, or he had the good fortune never to meet his friends again; for he has escaped such a very hot reception so far.

This gang was very daring, often committing the most impudent robberies in broad daylight, and on one or two occasions even robbing the police themselves, when this intelligent force was supposed to be hunting for them in order to obtain the reward offered for their capture. It was surprising how well-informed the gang was. If persons sold stock, or by any other means had money in their houses, they were pretty

certain to receive a visit, and lucky were they if they only lost their money.

Having some business to do with a neighbour of Griffiths, I thought I would take their place on the way. Accordingly, I went there, intending to stay an hour, and then proceed; but we had so much to talk about, and Arthur had so many completed improvements to show me, and so many proposed ones to consult me about, that the time slipped away unobserved, until it was so late in the evening that I consented, very willingly, to remain all night—the more so as Alice added her persuasion to her brother's, saying—

"You know, Mr. Flaxman, you might meet the Black Forest gang, and surely you would not prefer their society to ours."

Little she thought the meeting was so near, or what an important part she was to take in it.

Before dark, Arthur and I went to look at some young horses he had bred, which he had got in from the run for the purpose of breaking in; and as they were rather wild, we drove them into the stockyard to examine them at our leisure. After duly admiring and criticizing them, I noticed a very handsome horse—a dark, nutty chestnut, long, low, but very compact, with fine sloping shoulders, round barrel, powerful quarters, and great thighs, well let down, and one of the neatest heads, on a good but rather thick neck, I ever saw. This grand-looking horse stood on four of the shortest, flattest legs, with great big joints, you could imagine. He looked like carrying a man for his life; and, with his well-bred look and evident good condition, could no doubt both go and stay. Of course I asked Arthur what he was, and where he got him.

"He is a good horse," he replied, walking up to him, and rubbing his ears, as the horse leant his head on Arthur's shoulder. "I bought him last spring from Ryan, on the Goulburn, for my own riding; but he is such a first-rate hack, with gentle manners, and a mouth far too good for my rough, heavy hands, that I gave him to my sister. She never rides any other now, and has made such a pet of him that, when she calls him, he will leave the mob of horses and trot straight up to her. I really believe he likes being ridden by her."

"He is too good for such work," said I—"that is, I mean," correcting myself, "he is, or ought to be, from his looks, good

enough to win any steeplechase in the colony."

"So he is," returned Griffiths. "I had a spin once with Boomerang, and beat him, over two miles of fair country, too. But nothing will induce Alice to allow me to train him for the Melbourne races. And I think she is right, for he is perfection as a lady's horse, and racing would soon spoil him."

After we returned to the house, I remarked to Miss Griffiths what a splendid horse she had.

"Yes, he is a beauty, and as nice as he looks," she said. "We have many long rambles all over the bush together, and have got quite to like each other's company. I can leave him anywhere when I dismount, and he will always come when I call him. Ah, Chestu is a dear old fellow! But come, let us have a game at whist. Arthur can play dummy, if Mr. Flaxman will take me as a partner."

We must have been playing some time, when our attention was attracted by the loud, angry barking of the dogs, warning us that some one was approaching; but, thinking it might be one of the men from one of the out-stations, we took no notice of it. Directly almost, we heard footsteps on the verandah; and as we both jumped up to see what it was, the door which entered from the verandah was violently burst open, and two men rushed in, each holding a pistol levelled in his hand.

"Hold up your hands, or I'll blow your brains out!" cried one.

And you may be very certain we did not require a second bidding. For one instant I looked at Alice. Cool and collected she stood, her eyes flashing and glittering as I had never seen them do before. Then I thought of dashing at the nearest of the ruffians; but the sight of his pistol at once decided me that it was useless—nay, worse than useless, as it could but end in one way. A pair of worse-looking rascals I never saw. One was a short, thickset, bullet-headed, prize-fighting-looking fellow, with a flat, coarse face, covered with a stiff, bristly sort of beard. His eyes, red and weak, were deeply sunken in his head. His mouth, nothing but a mere slit across his face, was ornamented by long yellow tusks, and the corners were deeply stained with tobacco juice. A more repulsive villain could not be imagined. The other, though

not quite so hideous, was far from being a pretty boy. Taller than his companion, and equally strongly built, he looked the more dangerous of the two. Both were dressed in red serge shirts, cabbage-tree hats, and loose neckties—just like the generality of stockmen or shepherds.

I suppose I looked the most dangerous of our party, for one of them, the short blackguard, took a piece of rope and tied my hands behind me, whilst the other stood sentinel over us. Then they tied Arthur also, and began disputing about Alice, cursing and using the most dreadful oaths when they spoke. One was for tying her up also, but the other said—I omit the oaths with which he garnished his speech—

"What's the good of tying up a wench? One of us must stop here and watch them here swells, and the other can hunt for the swag. You go, Jack, and if this young 'ooman gives me any trouble, I'll find means to quiet her fast enough."

Jack laid his pistol on the table, beside his mate, and went in search of money. How I wished I could get free and seize the pistol on the table! I quietly tried my hands, and soon found it would be possible to slip them from the clumsily tied knot, but I did not see how I was to get free quickly enough to do any good. I saw Alice watching me as I tried to get my hands loose; and fearing the bushranger would also notice what I was about, desisted. I had no wish for giving him the least temptation to make a target of me. Presently the tall fellow who was hunting for booty came back, and, throwing a lot of trinkets belonging to Alice on the table, went up to Arthur and demanded where he kept his money, warning him, in a manner more forcible than polite, that it would be as well to tell him, "for if I don't get the cash—the whole lot of it, mind you—that you got for them 'jumbucks' you sold, I'll take it out of your hide." I told Arthur to tell him at once, as it was no use trying to save the money. So he told him it was in his room, and again he went off in search of it. I could hear him tossing everything about in the next room in his eagerness to find the money, and in a few minutes he called out—

"Here it is, Jack! We'll have a good burst over this lot next time we go to Melbourne for a spree."

Jack stepped towards the room; and, in

his hurry to know the result of the find, quite forgetting Alice, or not thinking a woman was likely to give much trouble, and no doubt trusting to our being tied securely, foolishly laid his pistol on the table beside his mate's.

Quick as thought Alice sprang forward, and catching them both up, held one out straight at the ruffian's head.

"Move but one finger," she said, in a low, firm voice—looking, although pale with excitement, determined and fully able to carry out her threat—"and I fire."

For a moment I thought the man meant mischief, but something in Alice's face warned him not to tempt his fate, and he cowered like a cur before the fair, delicate girl. How beautiful she looked! Like a statue cut out of marble she stood: not a tremor showed the violent struggle within. Only in her eyes was there any sign of excitement. Their soft expression was gone, and in its place blazed courage and determination, mixed with triumph and scorn. Little wonder that the miserable wretch shrunk beneath such a gaze, speechless with terror and amazement. Had he moved in the slightest degree, it would have been death: the pistol covered him with deadly aim, and was held there without wavering by a hand as cool and steady as if this game of life and death were childish play.

With a struggle I tore my hands free, and hastened to loose Arthur. Then, but not till then, Alice gave the pistols up to us, and saying, "Watch them—I am off to Kilmore for the police," hurried out of the room. Out into the dark, lonely night she went. Did she not fear that more of the gang might be hidden outside, guarding against surprise? Where were the men-servants? All gone as soon as they knew that the house was "stuck up"—gone to keep out of the way, not for assistance; leaving to a young girl the work which ought to have belonged to men.

Through the darkness out into the paddock. "Chestu! Chestu! good horse! Chestu!" Quickly he answers to his name; and, with hands now trembling with excitement, she hurriedly places her saddle on his back, and mounting, gallops off. Onward the two brave spirits go—away through the black, gloomy forest. Little thought she of how much now depended on her reaching the police station, and returning with help quickly. Still the brave girl galloped

onward, urging her horse at a pace through the wild forest which would have shaken the nerves of many a bold, reckless stock-rider. Her horse's flying feet startled the dingo prowling round the sheepfold, and frightened the "more-pork," which, sitting lonely on the limb of some tree, uttering its monotonous cry of "More pork! more pork!" flew far away into the neighbouring scrub, seeking to hide itself from its natural enemy.

An hour's riding at this reckless speed brought her to Kilmore; and she quickly told her errand, and, refusing to remain in spite of all persuasion, returned with the police towards the station, but at a slower and steadier pace than that at which she came.

Meantime, Arthur and I had firmly tied the two rascals to a chair each, and placed them far enough apart to prevent their being able to render one another any assistance, and had seated ourselves by the fire, each with a glass of grog and a pipe, to await the arrival of the police, and to watch over our prisoners. We had been sitting there for more than two hours, when we heard the sound of horses' feet at the back of the house, and of course concluded that the police had come, although rather surprised at their being so soon.

"Wait here with these two guests of ours," said Arthur to me, "and I will go out and bring them in. I'm not sorry they have come so soon, for I half expected to see some more of the gang turn up; and if they had, our lives would not have been worth much."

Arthur turned and went out as he spoke; and, looking at the two men tied beside me, I saw a villanous look of savage delight on their ill-favoured countenances, which made my heart stand still for an instant. It flashed at once, suddenly but certainly, across my brain that the rest of the gang *had* returned, and I rushed to the door, calling after Arthur to come back as he valued his life. As I passed through the door I met Arthur, who was hurrying back, and nearly knocked me down by coming full tilt against me in his confusion.

"Back! back!" he cried—"the whole gang are here. Into my room—quick! Never mind the lights."

Not a moment was to spare, for as we gained Arthur's room, which opened off the sitting-room, the bushrangers entered the

house. It was probably well for us that we had not time to take the lights into the small room with us, for we had thus the great advantage of seeing our enemies without their being able to see us. In they came—six dirty, low, desperate-looking fellows they were, each armed with revolvers and bowie-knives, and evidently half drunk, and ready for the commission of any crime.

"Now, Arthur," I whispered, "don't fire" (he was raising his pistol); "reserve your powder until they attempt to enter this room, and then fire coolly and steadily at the *left-hand* man—I'll take care of the *right*. We *must not* miss our aim, or we are lost. Our only safety lies in prompt, energetic action. Remember they cannot see us, and therefore cannot fire with any degree of precision; and if we can keep them off for a little time longer, we will yet be saved."

The blackguards were evidently greatly taken aback by seeing their two companions tied fast and prisoners; but the two worthies soon explained the matter, with many hideous oaths and deep vows of vengeance against Arthur and me. "As soon as they were let loose, the one who was called Jack said to his companions—

"Now then, mates, the sooner we finish this here job the better, for that there wench won't be long before she brings the whole 'camp' down on us, like a swarm of ants. Now I votes, maties, that we just get a hold of the two downy coves wots been and hidden away in that room," pointing to where we were.

Without more words they came on towards us, each with a pistol ready. I do not know what Arthur felt, but my pulses throbbed, and my ears seemed to be full and bursting; but my hand was as steady as ever, and my nerves like steel.

"Now, then," I muttered in a hoarse, low tone, "remember—fire at the man on the left, and aim low, and don't hurry."

Raising our pistols, we both fired together. The man that I fired at gave a sudden shudder and fell forward on his face, shot dead; and Arthur's man, shot through the breast, but not killed, staggered and nearly fell. The others drew back, taken by surprise; but only for a moment, for, firing their pistols towards us, they again rushed to storm our little stronghold.

"Fire again—quick, Arthur!" I cried, as I levelled my pistol, and pulled the trigger.

• There was but one report, and another of the ruffians fell, either killed or badly hurt. This time the gang drew back, evidently thinking it was not safe to trifle with us.

Then I found Arthur was wounded in the arm, not dangerously, but sufficiently to prevent his being of much use should the fellows again make a charge on us. This, however, they seemed not inclined to do; and we could hear them discussing what was best to be done. One suggested firing at us in volleys on the chance of maiming or killing us; but one, with greater ingenuity, proposed setting fire to the house, and either burning us alive, or, as he said, "smoking the — things out, like a pair of 'Bandicoots' in a hollow log." This idea was received with general satisfaction, and preparations were at once commenced to carry it out. Logs and scrub were piled up against the walls of the wooden house, and lighted in many places at once. The dry wood soon caught, and in a few minutes was blazing bright and clear, but, fortunately for us, with little or no smoke. Still, the heat was intense and suffocating, and in a very few moments more would have either become unbearable and driven us out to meet certain death at the hands of the cruel ruffians who stood round the house, laughing and jesting at our sufferings, or have consumed us where we were, with no chance of escaping from torture the most agonizing and horrible imaginable.

After a brief consultation, we agreed to rush out and face death at once, rather than bear the dreadful fate waiting for us. Hastily I tied Arthur's shattered arm to his side, and then, shaking one another by the hand, we were on the point of rushing through the flames, when we heard shots fired, and soon voices.

The police had come! How they captured the bushrangers I know not, except from hearsay; for as we ran through the fire, blinded by smoke and nearly smothered with heat, I felt a sharp twitch in my side, like a red-hot iron running into my flesh, and then a ringing, singing sound in my ears, a confused sound of voices, and a blank. When I recovered consciousness, I found myself lying in bed, weak, and with a strange feeling of lassitude which was new to me. I had been badly wounded, and loss of blood had nearly killed me. It was many weeks before I was well enough

to hear all the particulars of that night, and many more ere I was strong enough to go down to Melbourne, where I was wanted to identify the bushrangers taken by the police. Arthur soon got well, as his wound was not of a very serious nature, although one of the bones in his arm was broken.

The brave girl who saved her brother's life and mine married about two years afterwards, and, with her husband, went back to dear old England, where they are now living, near a quiet, pretty country village, and where she leads a peaceful, happy life, without fear of such interruptions to her happiness as she met with in this hotbed of crime, wickedness, and sin, where the stern arm of the law is the only check on the evil passions of ruffians who, in their cowardice, fear man, but who, worse than devils, neither acknowledge nor honour their God.

"That was a plucky sort of girl," remarked Charlie; "too good to be lost in a stupid, humdrum country village in England, where teaching dirty little brats to read would be about the extent of her labours. Girls like her are what we colonials want for wives; girls that can rough it a bit, and still retain all that is gentle and womanly in their natures."

"Go it, old boy," I cried. "I hope you will soon find a ditto of Alice Griffiths, and persuade her to change her name to Stevens. But, seriously, I agree with you, Charlie. By Jove, what a jolly mate to have when cattle-driving! Watching the restless brutes wouldn't be half bad work under such circumstances."

"Now, Bill, it will be your turn to-morrow night to hold forth," said Pat, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, preparatory to going to sleep. "So ransack your brains, and let us have something good."

"I'll do my best, but you must not expect a lot from me," replied Bill, as he tumbled off to sleep.

A GIRL OF THE PERIOD.

HATEFUL title, hateful phrase, hateful article that first set it ringing in our ears! I thought so at the time, though it was impossible to help enjoying its envenomed cleverness, and deemed it the broadest, most exaggerated caricature that had ever been drawn. And yet I have met one. Yes, I can sympathise with the Ameri-

can navigator who has had the misfortune to see the sea serpent, and is bound, in the interests of truth, to pass during the rest of his life as a person upon whose word no reliance can be placed; for it is to be feared that I too may be suspected of romancing when I assert that I have ridden for some hundreds of miles with a girl of the period, warranted *Saturday Review* pattern.

When I was young—

I paused here to allow for the reader's glancing to the end of this narrative to ascertain its length. False alarm, you see—it is short, in spite of the threatening commencement.

When I was young, very young, I formed an attachment to a girl of my own youth, who would have had me if her parents had allowed her, which they very properly, I suppose, did not, and she married a man very much older and better off, who, I fear, made her dreadfully happy. I went into despair and wrote poetry, which I read to such sympathetic listeners as I could find. But my friends began to drop off one by one, so I tried dissipation, and replaced them. Dissipation, however, made me bilious, and as a state of perpetual nausea and headache is quite as bad as that of blighted affection, I tried hard work, first in England, and then, more lucratively, in a British dependency. It was a capital remedy, curing the heart and filling the pocket; and, at the age of wisdom, I returned to my native land for good.

After a little while I began to feel lonely. My old friends were dispersed, dead, or converted by time in mere acquaintances: another generation had sprung up which did not know me. I wanted a home. The obvious course seemed to be marriage. My early and successful rival was as old as I now was when he took my bride out of my mouth, and he had been happy enough afterwards, by all accounts; why should not I, in my turn, take some other fellow's bride out of *his* mouth? I assumed that any girl worth having would be provided with an ineligible nibbler, just as the best peach always shows signs of having had a wasp at it; and I did not intend, after waiting all these years, to put up with a fruit which was not specially attractive.

One of the old set, Lushington, had married directly after my leaving England, and had now a marriageable daughter, who suited me in every respect—a fine, healthy, merry

girl, with a frank, open face, feminine in feeling and expression, ladylike in manner, quite good-looking enough without being a beauty.

Her father had altered less than most of the friends of my youth; and her mother was a charming woman, good-tempered and genial; so that not only was Lucy Lushington an attractive girl in herself, but her family was a nice one to marry into, which is quite another matter. The only drawback was the fact of my being twenty years her senior; but I was strong and hale, and no gray in my hair—or very little, quite underneath. I did not look her father's age at all. Then she might have been taken for eight or ten years older than she was. Altogether, I fixed upon Lucy.

The Lushingtons lived in Cheshire, and had but come up to London for a couple of months during the season, which was how I met them. I soon saw that Lucy was the sort of wife I was on the look-out for, and commenced siege operations in form. I broke ground at a flower show, opened the first parallel during a sentimental opera, and carried the parents with a frank statement of my resources, and so hoped that I was pushing my way to the heart of the place—or, at any rate, might induce her to capitulate.

I did not much expect love—at all events, before marriage; and Lucy seemed to like me well enough. She brightened up when I came, and asked where they should meet me next when I left, and chatted to me as freely and pleasantly as if she had known me from her cradle. However, I made no formal proposition while they were in town, desiring to think the matter calmly over first; but a fortnight after their return to Cheshire I made up my mind, and wrote a decided letter to Lushington, putting it to him if he thought Lucy would have me if I asked her?

The reply soon came. Lushington and his wife approved of the match with all their hearts, and thought there would be no difficulty. But Lucy was a queer girl about some things; and if her mother urged the marriage, it might very likely set her against it, dutiful as she was in most respects. The best plan would be for me to go down and stay with them in Cheshire, and take an opportunity of speaking to Lucy myself.

This was reasonable enough. Why should the foreign custom of settling matters with

the parents be introduced to save me trouble, and the poor girl be done out of her British courtship?

I named an early day for my visit, and when it came I started.

That great historical measure, the Smoking Carriages Act, had not yet been passed, so I had to give the guard a shilling for solitude. But at Reading a young lady got into my carriage. She was a fine-grown girl, dressed in the height of fashion, with a large chignon, and a forward hat, and a tight, spotted veil; with smart petticoat, short dress, striped stockings, and high-heeled boots. I rushed to the opposite side of the carriage, with the intention of throwing away my regalia, not half smoked through; but she stopped me. It would be a pity, especially as she did not mind the smell of tobacco—in fact, liked it.

"Sensible girl," thought I, as I replaced the cigar in my mouth; and I commenced, in gratitude, to try and make myself agreeable. But whether the young lady thought that her kindly impulse had carried her too far, or whether I failed at first to hit upon topics of conversation which interested her, she was very retiring, and confined herself for some time to monosyllables. Now, everybody has his little weakness; and mine is a strong objection to being baffled in an endeavour to make people talk. So, without persisting or boring, and between intervals of newspaper reading, I tried subject after subject, and touched the right chord at last. It was horses. I think that I need not be accused of stupidity for having remained "cold" so long. A middle-aged, old-fashioned fellow could hardly be expected to hit upon the stable as the probable centre of a young lady's affections. Now that I had got her pitch, however, there was no longer any difficulty in drawing animated talk from her lips. We spoke of the last Derby and the late Goodwood Cup, and the prospects of the Ebor and the Leger—I cribbing a bit now and then from the sporting intelligence in the newspaper to seem duly knowing. Then we plunged into reminiscences of the hunting field, and I was able to tell her something about foreign horses and bits and saddles which was new to her; and so we got very friendly.

"You are quite sure you do not mind smoking?" I asked, when I required another cigar, after ten minutes' refreshment at Swindon or somewhere.

"Very fond of it, on the contrary," she replied.

"I cannot see why ladies should not smoke as well as gentlemen; indeed, I believe a good many do."

"Oh, yes—I know several who do."

"Have you ever been induced to try?"

"Yes, I have often smoked a cigarette."

"Dear, dear! I wish I had one to offer you now."

"I wish you had!"

"Do you think one of these cigars would be too much for you? They are very good tobacco."

"So I smell," said the young lady. "I think I *will* try one, if you please."

She raised her veil a little, put the regalia in her mouth, lit it, and puffed away with gusto. I confess that I certainly should not have offered it if I had anticipated any probability of its being accepted; for those regalias were very large and full-flavoured, and I feared that the effects might be distressing. But there was no cause for alarm: the only action of the nicotine was to soothe the nerves and open the heart of my fair companion to such an extent that she confided to me its most precious secret.

I did not at all like the way in which she began.

"I don't mind telling you something," said she; "only, of course, I trust to your honour not to mention the matter to a soul till afterwards."

It was discouraging, under existing circumstances, to be treated as an old fogey, and taken for father confessor by the first pretty girl I met in a public conveyance. Was my appearance, then, so *very* venerable?

"I promise," said I.

"Well, then, Fidelity is a moral."

A moral quality, I supposed she meant. But why was I to conceal the fact of this young lady's admiration for a virtue which is professed by courtiers and lovers, and practised by puppy dogs, until after her marriage?

I could think of nothing better to say than—

"Ah?"

"Yes," she replied. "Why, look here—Fidelity beat Juno at a stone at Newmarket, didn't she?"

I thought it best to nod.

"Well, then, taking the line through Juno, Black Tommy, and Peppermint, it would be like putting Black Tommy in at five stone

four, at which weight it would be a hundred to one on him; in fact, all the other horses would scratch. And yet you can get seven to one against Fidelity at this moment."

"Curious, isn't it?" said I.

"I confess, I look upon the race as over, bar accidents."

So we were back to the stable, were we! I had been terribly puzzled, but now I had my cue. So I looked as cunning as I conveniently could, and said—

"Ah, but is the money all right?"

"That's it," cried my fair companion, triumphantly. "They have worked it beautifully. But I happen to know that the stable are on to a man. It's a real good thing, you may depend upon it."

Soon after this we got the railway fidgets, and conversation languished. Reading could no longer be managed in that vibrating carriage, without a certainty of headache and a risk of permanent blindness. Experience had taught me the futility of trying to sleep in a railway train; but the young lady endeavoured to compose herself, and failed utterly. At last we got to a ten-minutes-allowed-for-refreshment station, and that was a relief. One could stretch one's legs—or limbs, rather, as there is a lady in the case—and partake of bottled stout and pork pie. That is the snack for a long railway journey. It is sure to make you stupid and content to sit still, and may possibly give you an indigestion, which beguiles the time gloriously: an hour watching for the symptoms; an hour deciding whether you will take a Cockle on arrival, or two, or three, &c.

The bell rang; we hurried back to our seats. The guard banged our prison door to. A newsboy came to the window—

"*Times, Standard, Daily Telegraph, Punch*, pack of cards!"

"Let us have a pack of cards," cried my fellow-traveller, who was now quite like an old acquaintance.

"Hi, boy!"

I took a pack, and when the train was clear of the station the girl challenged me to name my game.

Now, I have mingled freely with all sorts of fellow-creatures—home, colonial, and foreign—and confess that a proposition to play at cards, made by a perfect stranger, would, as a rule, excite unfavourable suspicions in my mind. But in the present instance distrust would have been a shal-

low mistake. Miss Period was very, very *fast*, and aped masculine ways to an absurdly extravagant extent; but for all that, it was impossible for any one who had any experience and judgment at all to doubt but what she was as honest as the day. The girl was no card-sharper. If she had been a man, you would have deemed her a very gentlemanly young fellow, for there was not a tinge of vulgarity about her accent or manners. The conclusion I came to was that she was the only girl in a large family of boys, and had lost her mother early; that she was by nature and habit very manly in her tastes, and was exaggerating them in order to mystify a middle-aged gentleman like myself. The only way to foil such an attack being to take everything as a matter of course, I determined to humour her to the top of her bent, and proposed blind hookey; and at that simple game we gambled for sixpences, with fluctuating fortunes, for three mortal hours; and when we arrived at our destination, I was the loser of a couple of pounds, which the girl popped into her purse with a natural air which showed that she was not at all unaccustomed to playing at games of chance for money. I offered to call a cab, and see to her luggage; but she declined, on the plea that she always paid a porter.

"People write to the papers to say that it's wrong," she explained; "and as I don't choose to be dictated to, I make a point of it."

So I took off my hat to her, and commenced negotiations for a six-mile drive to the Lushingtons' place; for at the end of so long a journey it would not do to take the first horse on the stand. At last I selected a likely animal and driver, who did justice to my discrimination by rattling me over in thirty-five minutes; and you should have felt the roads!

As we jolted along, I reflected upon the difference between the Girl and the Lucy of my hopes; and the only drawback to my satisfaction at the contrast was that I could not get the last words of Miss Period out of my head. For observation suggested that it was not fast, mannish girls only who resented dictation. Suppose Lucy also had a habit of doing the exact reverse of what she was told! Her father's remark that it might be injudicious for her mother to support my suit

too openly seemed to favour such an idea. It was true that a very judicious husband might get his own way even under such circumstances, by ordering his wife to do what he most objected to, and forbidding those things which he wished done; but had I the genius of tact necessary for such a complicated existence? H'm—perhaps I was making a mistake; perhaps—pooh! "Look before you leap" sounds like wisdom, but "The more you look at it the less you will like it," is an axiom with more common sense and practical application about it.

There is one very agreeable characteristic of a courtship the course of which runs smooth, and that is the attention shown you by the parents, and the consequent care taken of you by their domestics. Lushington rushed out to meet me without his hat; Mrs. Lushington came into the hall beaming; a glass of the driest possible sherry was administered before I had been seated in the drawing-room five minutes; my keys were demanded, and when I went up to the best bed-room to dress for dinner, I found all my evening clothes laid out, a clean shirt with the studs in, and a collar with the white tie inserted. Item, a hot bath ready. Now I have never dared to indulge in a valet, for fear he should become my master; and yet it is a great comfort to me to be waited upon, so that I went downstairs in a very amiable frame of mind indeed.

At dinner my glass was kept filled.

After dinner, when the ladies rose, I was given a cigar.

These details may seem offensive to the fair; but the man who has turned forty and ceased from active labour is apt to become self-indulgent. He has learned that there are no great joys in life without over-balancing penalties, and he consequently prefers to accumulate as many little comforts about him as he can.

But where was Lucy all this time? Present, madam. Lucy was in the drawing-room when I arrived, and sat opposite to me at dinner. She seemed glad to see me, and said I was very good-natured to come and relieve their dullness. My silence about her in the account of my arrival was an artistic attempt to convey the state of my mind with reference to her. Now that I had quite determined to make her an offer of marriage, she had become too serious a

matter to be talked about. A man on the eve of an examination, upon the result of which his future depends, prefers to direct his thoughts and conversation to other topics. So do I.

An opportunity was afforded me on the very first morning.

"Excuse me for an hour or so, old fellow," said my host. "I have got a little justice to do to-day."

Then, a little later, Mrs. Lushington discovered that she must unfortunately go into the village.

"Lucy," said I, "I am deteriorating."

"Good gracious!" she cried, looking up from her work with genuine surprise.

"Yes," I continued; "old bachelors get narrow and selfish."

"And gouty?"

"Well, yes—and gouty. I have led too busy a life to miss home blessings much; but now I am settled in the old country, with a comfortable income, I want a companion to share it."

"There ought not to be much difficulty in finding one," said Lucy. "Girls who want husbands are plentiful enough."

"Aye, but I am no longer a young man."

"What does that matter? You are not an old one."

"But, then—I am full of butts—there is only one who would suit me, and I am not sure whether she would have me. Enough of beating about the bush—will you have me for a husband, Lucy?"

Lucy dropped her work, and looked up at me, with eyes exceedingly wide open. Then she got very white; then she flushed very red. At last she said—

"You have taken me completely by surprise. I never had a notion of such a thing. I have not thought of you in that light at all."

"Well, then," said I, "do not give me an answer at once; take time to consider—"

At this critical moment a servant entered the room, and gave Lucy a note.

"From a young lady downstairs, miss, who has called to see you—an old school-fellow she says."

"Is she in the dining-room?" said Lucy, after reading the note. "I will go down to her."

But the words were hardly out of her mouth before a footstep was heard on the

threshold, and in hurried my Girl of the Period.

"My dearest Lucy, what a time it is since I saw you!" she cried, embracing her with effusion. Then, seeing me, she held out her hand. "Ah, my travelling companion of yesterday! The idea of meeting you again so soon, and here! Do you want your revenge at blind hookey? You will excuse me just now, I am sure. I have not seen my dear Lucy for so long."

"I only play at blind hookey at the end of long railway journeys," said I, laughing. And, guessing that I was one too many, I took my departure.

In the grounds I found Lushington.

"Well?" said he.

"Nothing decided," replied I. "A young lady has called, an old acquaintance of Lucy's—Miss Brown, I think the name is."

"Ah? I know she has some female correspondent, though I am ignorant of the name, and never saw her yet. Has she come to stay, I wonder?"

The Girl had *not* come to stay; she would not even remain to lunch, but hurried away directly her tête-à-tête with Lucy, which was a long one, was disturbed. Poor thing! she must have had misfortunes, for all her fastness and apparent high spirits, for Lucy was very low and tearful after she had gone.

By the next day, however, she had cheered up, and on that which followed, I took an opportunity of asking whether she had considered my proposition.

"Yes," she said, "and I do wish that you would say nothing more about it. I like you so much as a friend, and if you would keep so, and let me look upon you as a fath—I mean as a brother, it would be so nice."

It was Sunday evening. We had dined an hour earlier than usual, and were strolling about the garden, listening to the last note of the blackbirds, smelling the syringa, watching the stars come out one by one. Most romantic, had I but been the right man. However, I was not; and I set myself to find out whether the one particular individual existed. And here the peculiar influence of the hour assisted me, for never was an evening better adapted for heart openings.

Of course it was the old story, my old story over again. The favourite plot of every play, and every story in prose or verse, because it

is the one of which we have the most experience in real life. I wonder if there is a civilized man or woman who never had a little love-plant blighted in his or her spring-time? If so, the specimen should be given over to the physiologist and phrenologist for analysis. The heart of this abnormal creature would probably be found of excellent India-rubber.

The hero, "in love with Lucy," as the dear old play-books have it, was a friend of childhood, a cousin twenty times removed, and a cornet of Lancers. He was nineteen, had an allowance of five hundred a year, besides his pay, and only spent seven hundred. When he and Lucy were both of age, he was to coax his people to pay off his little debts—which, as he intended to steer clear of money-lenders, would be under a thousand pounds—and marry her. There was to be no more reckless expenditure after marriage, for he would exchange into the "Heavies," and only hunt once a week. But, alas! would I believe it?—papa and mamma entertained a blind prejudice against the cornet. They called him reckless, extravagant, and all sorts of dreadful things. They had even said that he cared for somebody else, so that she had almost begun to think of giving him up; and that was the reason why she had hesitated a moment when I first spoke. But, on calm reflection, she was convinced that she could never be happy with another.

After a sympathetic pause, I then repaid confidence with confidence, in my turn, and told her, more succinctly, the little episode of my own youth—omitting, however, to point out that it happened before she was born. The moral I intended her to deduce was, of course, that as my charmer was happy with a matured Another, she might be happy with me; but, to my dismay, she jumped to a totally different conclusion.

"Oh!" she exclaimed; "and you were driven by her faithlessness to foreign lands, and have been deprived of friends and home. What a warning to me! *He*, too, might exchange into an Indian regiment, and be killed, or have sunstroke; and then I should die of remorse."

We went in to tea, and I relinquished all matrimonial designs upon Lucy—not because of the youthful Lancer, but in consequence of her talking to me about him so freely, which I took as a sign that she

looked upon me in a very patriarchal light. I need hardly say that my stay in Cheshire was not a prolonged one. I took a little run through North Wales, and returned to London. I had made my effort to escape from a life of chambers, clubs, and bachelor repasts, and had been unsuccessful. After all, I find solace.

Upwards of a year after my visit to the Lushingtons, I accepted an invitation from a friendly colonel to meet him at Aldershot, and see a little pomp and circumstance; and as I was provided with a comfortably furnished hut, had the use of two horses, and was taken occasionally for a member of the Royal Family, or some one exalted from the War Office—as the regimental cook was clever, the weather fine, the Long Valley reviews gorgeous, and the whole scene stirring and novel, I did not find the lines in which I was temporarily accommodated at all hard ones. Hospitality was rife, and, as the guest of a man who was a general favourite, I received many invitations—amongst others, one from a Lancer regiment.

I was struck, as we sat down to dinner, with the youthful appearance of the president, or vice—I am very stupid at making out which is the top of a table. He seemed a clean-limbed, active young fellow, soldier-like withal; but his face was as smooth as a girl's, and somehow, not unfamiliar to me. I pride myself on never forgetting a face, and I generally manage to recollect the circumstances under which I have previously seen it; but now I was baffled. It could not have been very long since I met him, either—his youth forbade that. However, the matter did not annoy me much at the time, for I had an agreeable, chatty neighbour on either side of me, a good dinner before me, and a powerful appetite; so that my attention was for the most part more pleasantly employed than in a painful struggle with a fleeting reminiscence. Yet, at times, I stole a furtive glance towards the lad, and on each occasion felt more firmly convinced that I had met him before.

I had no opportunity of speaking to him at the dinner table; but when we adjourned to the ante-room, he accosted me of his own accord.

"Will you try one of these cigars?" he said, holding an open case to me. "They are pretty fair, I think; though of course

they cannot be compared to your regalias."

Oh, he knew my regalias; and we *had* met! I was sure I could not be mistaken.

"Your face and voice are familiar to me," I said, accepting his tobacco; "but I cannot, for the life of me, remember at the moment where or how we became acquainted. Ah!" I added, as a light flashed upon me, "do you happen to have a sister?"

"Are you thinking of a fast girl, who travels alone by railway, smokes, and plays blind hookey with strangers?"

"You mean to say that you—"

"Not so loud, please. I should get into an awful row if the chief heard anything about it."

"I can believe that; though I must say your get-up was capital."

"So I've often been told, when acting girls' parts in private theatricals. It was that put the idea into my head."

"It was a strange frolic," said I, shaking my head.

"It answered," he replied. "You see, I heard from a friend that the girl I was engaged to had been set against me, and that another fellow, who was backed by the parent Lushingtons, was going down to Cheshire after her. It was no good trying to keep her head straight by letter, for her mother looks at her correspondence to see if there is anything from me; I could not call in person, being forbidden the house; so I thought I would try to get to see Lucy, as Miss Brown, an old school friend of hers. Asked for leave, dressed the part, and arrived just in time. For I am not at all sure that she would not have thrown me over if she had gone much longer without seeing or hearing anything of me—at least, she did hear something of me; but it was not creditable, or half true. It was queer, though, that you, whom I travelled down with, should have been the other fellow, wasn't it?"

I could not help smiling.

"You talk rather freely about it," said I, "considering my position in the affair."

"Well," said he, "I beg pardon, I am sure; but, you see, I thought you would like to know, as you have given the matter up. After all, why should you mind? One girl is as good as another to you; but with me it is a case of spoons. Will you have a soda and brandy?"

So my evidence goes for nothing; and

they may still be right who hold that the Girl of the Period is but a Girl of a Periodical.

IN BRIGHT DAYS YET TO COME.

LAY, lay thy hand in mine, love,
And let us sink to rest,
And bid our hearts take courage—
Whatever comes is best.
The past is pass'd and over,
We draw near our long home;
But, love, a hope remaineth
Of bright days yet to come—
Of bright days yet to come, love,
Of bright days yet to come.

What though the past was bitter,
If we have present peace?
What reck we of our labours,
Now that our labours cease?
For now 'tis ours to hope, love,
As we draw near our home,
For sure reward of faith, love,
For bright days yet to come—
For bright days yet to come, love,
For bright days yet to come.

And if the bright days come, love,
Ere our life's sands be run,
We'll praise God for His mercy,
That all our work is done.
And then we'll wait together
Till He shall call us home,
To joy in all the joy, love,
Of bright days yet to come—
Of bright days yet to come, love,
Of bright days yet to come.

GORDON CAMPBELL.

TABLE TALK.

THE tyro in whist-playing may consult with advantage the book of a musical doctor and doctor of music, whose "Theory of the Modern Scientific Game of Whist" has reached a fifth edition. This high degree of popularity speaks sufficiently of the merit of the little manual. Whist is a game that grows more popular every day; yet it is a game in which—suppose four persons gathered together—one bad player will spoil the enjoyment of the other three. It is to repeat a truism to say that this is, perhaps, the best of all in-door recreations at which people sit down—the largest possible fund of amusement for people of all ages; while it ought to be especially the *cheval de bataille* of every idle human being over fifty years of age who is possessed of average intelligence. As there are many persons, however, who not only are not versed in "leads," or great at the mysteries of this noble game, but who, on the contrary, find

it difficult to acquire a knowledge of what to do at whist and the best way to do it, we commend them to Dr. Pole's "Rhyming Rules," appended to his treatise on the game. For example, what can be better than these specimens of science reduced to verse:—

"Mind well the rules for trumps—you'll often need them;
When you hold five, 'tis always right to lead them.

Watch also for your partner's trump-request,
To which, with less than four, lead out your best.

When you discard, weak suits you ought to choose—
For strong ones are too valuable to lose."

IN A PRIMITIVE state of society, the value of our hundred pounds is represented by so many bushels of wheat or head of cattle. Next we come to a time when civilization demands an easier way of settling a debt than that presented by corn or cattle. The nation pays its debtors in gold. But when we arrive at our own high and artificial state of civilization, gold is too cumbrous a medium for exchange, and a hundred pounds may be paid in many different mediums of exchange, none of which possess intrinsic value. To this state of affairs Mr. Warren owes his success. His industry, skill, and patience have been rewarded; and he is to be complimented upon having duped very sharp men—City bankers and brokers—who have hitherto rather prided themselves on their sharpness and caution. Capital is shy; but the forger is patient. At last there is an easy victory for him. It is a question of money and time; and it appears that the only protection bankers and bill dealers have against any Warrens in embryo that may be in the field, lies in the probability that would-be forgers and swindlers on a magnificent scale rarely possess ten thousand sterling pounds to start with, or the exquisite power of imitation in the matter of handwriting possessed by the Mr. Warren who has "done" the West-end Branch of the Bank of England.

IT IS HARDLY FAIR of Mr. Chatterton, of Drury-lane Theatre, to take to himself the credit of having revived, with the aid of his veteran partner, Mr. B. Webster, that wonderful triumph of fifty years ago, "The Cataract of the Ganges." The thing has been successfully done in New York, it appears, for we extract from the *New York*

Dramatic World, of February 15th, this scrap of news:—

"GRAND OPERA HOUSE.

"The foaming torrents of 'The Cataract of the Ganges' will cease to dash upon the stage of the Grand Opera House next Monday evening."

So, after all, Mr. Chatterton tried his "grand revival" after the news had reached him that another "reviver" had made a good thing of it. It strikes us, as it probably strikes the more intelligent patrons of the Drury-lane establishment, that all the "gush" in the advertisements of "revivals of the old drama," &c., &c., must be discounted at a per cent. If the enterprising manager elects, as "an experiment on the public taste," to revive the rubbish of fifty years ago, he has not the unpleasant necessity of paying a few shillings or pounds a night to the "poor devils of authors" who write, and want to live by writing, the rubbish of to-day.

FROM the same source (the *New York Dramatic World*) we learn:—"A veteran actor of inferior fame once expressed his extreme dislike to what he was pleased to term 'the sham wine parties' of Macbeth and others. He was aweary of the Barmecide banquets of the stage, of affecting to quaff with gusto imaginary wine out of empty pasteboard goblets, and of making believe to have an appetite for wooden apples and 'property' comestibles. He was in every sense a poor player, and had often been a very hungry one. He took especial pleasure in remembering the entertainments of the theatre in which the necessities of performance, or regard for rooted tradition, involved the setting of real edible food before the actors. At the same time, he greatly lamented the limited number of dramas in which these precious opportunities occurred. He had grateful memories of the rather obsolete Scottish melodrama of 'Cramond Brig,' for in this work old custom demanded the introduction of a real sheep's head, with accompanying trotters. He told of a North British manager who was wont—especially when the salaries he was supposed to pay were somewhat in arrears, and he desired to keep his company in good humour, and may be alive—to produce this play on Saturday night. For some days before the performance the dainties that were to grace it

underwent exhibition in the green-room. A label bore the inscription—"This sheep's head will appear in the play of "Cramond Brig" on next Saturday night. God save the King." 'It afforded us all two famous dinners,' says this veteran. 'We had a large pot of broth made with the head and feet. These we ate on Saturday night—the broth we had on Sunday.'" It appears that in the memory of this veteran the following plays were distinguished as red-letter plays, from their banquets being something more enjoyable than imaginary slices cut from wooden joints, and washed down with toast and water:—A Scottish play, "The Gentle Shepherd," of Allan Ramsay, in which it was long the custom on stages north of the Tweed to present a real haggis, although niggardly managers were often tempted to substitute for the genuine dish a far less savoury, if more wholesome, mess of oatmeal. Another, better known to modern times, was the musical farce, "No Song, No Supper." A steaming hot boiled leg of lamb and turnips may be described as quite the leading character in the entertainment. Without this appetizing addition the play has hardly ever been represented.

WHILST THE FRENCH "Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques" has resolved by a majority of 109 votes to 22 that no director of a theatre shall be allowed to play any piece, whether dramatic or lyric, which has been written or composed by himself, his actors, or any of the persons in his employ; and that no author or composer shall be at liberty to work in concert with the director or his employés as afore-said—a resolution come to only the other day—English writers ask much less. They demand that their novels shall not be stolen by "adapters" until they, the authors of the novels, have had the chance of presenting their own characters, situations, and scenes on the stage in their own way. In a word, they ask for a close time during which the stageright of their works, as well as the copyright, shall be their own. And, modestly enough, they ask only for a short close time. But really there seems no reason, in common sense or justice, why the stageright and copyright should not run together. Why should an "adapter"—to use a pretty and euphemistic word for what he really is—have the right to work his own sweet will with the imaginative creations

of another man? It is high time that the form of robbery called "adapting" should be made as illegal and obnoxious to the sanction of positive law as any other form of theft. Let the "adapter" only adapt with the consent of the author; or, failing to obtain this, let him be compelled to stay his scissors and lavish stock of paste until the author's rights in his creation of scene, character, and incident have decently run out.

AT THE DUDLEY GALLERY—an exhibition which, for the most part, receives pictures from artists who do not exhibit at the more fashionable water colour societies—there are two pictures this year well worth seeing. They are the work of Mr. E. Burne Jones. One has the title, "Love among the Ruins," the other is called "The Hesperides." They occupy the best places in the gallery, and are worthy of them, if poetic conception, skilful grouping, careful painting, and results in effect more like the best oil painting than water-colour, can deserve such distinction. These pictures alone are worth a visit; but there is much more in the Dudley Gallery to be seen and admired.

EPITAPH IN WREXHAM CHURCH,
DENBIGHSHIRE.

"Here lies interred beneath this stone
The beard, ye Flesh and eke ye Bones
Of Wrexham Clark old Daniel Jones."*

EPITAPH IN KINSON CHURCHYARD,
DORSETSHIRE.

"One little ounce of tea I did not steal.
From human justice I to God appeal.
Put tea in one scale, human blood in t'other,
And think what 'tis to kill a Harmless brother."

Very harmless! The tombstone records the age and death of a smuggler who went out armed to the teeth to run a cargo; but instead of shooting the preventive officer, the preventive officer shot him.

* Exact copy of rhyming and spelling.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W.C. All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. No unaccepted MSS. will be returned until a written application has been made for them.

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March 22, 1873.

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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXVII



WHEN Arthur heard MacIntyre's story he was amazed.

"Why did you not tell me all this before?" he asked, at last. "You have known it all these years—why did you not tell it when my father died? Let me look at the letters again. They are in my father's writing. Is there some villainy in this?"

"The extract from the register, ye'll ob-sairve," said the philosopher, passing over the injurious nature of the last words, "is certificated by a firm of respectable solicitors, and enclosed to me by their agents in London."

"Why not tell the story before?"

"Loard, loard! it is a suspicious world. You will remember, Mr. Arthur, that I was once violently assaulted by your brother?"

"I remember."

"It was because I hinted at this secret. For no other reason. Therefore, as I was not personally interested in either of you getting the money—though I certainly always received great consideration from Philip—I held my tongue. The time has now come, when poor Phil is ruined."

"Ruined! How?"

"He has lost his money on the turf. He has now nothing. This being the case, I found it time to interfere. Here are my papers—here my proofs. It's vera hard for you, Mr. Arthur, after so many years o' the pillow o' luxury, and ye will commence to remember some of the maxims—"

"What does Philip say?"

"He told me to bring you the things and tell you the story."

"It seems incredible—impossible. And yet the letters and the certificate."

"You can fight it, Mr. Arthur, if you please. You will have to put me in the box; and I shall, most reluctantly, have to represent to the world the secrets of your father's life."

Arthur recoiled in dismay.

"It is not a question of fighting. It is a question of doing what is right. If only your story is true. Pray, Mr. MacIntyre, what is the price you have put upon it?"

He smote his chest.

"Go on, Arthur, go on. You into whose young mind I poured the treasures of philosophy. Insult your aged and poverty-stricken tutor—and a Master of Arts of an ancient and—"

"You sold me an address."

"Pardon me. I borrowed forty pounds of you, and, with a kindness which I regret not to see rated at its real worth, I gave you Miss Madeleine's address. I hope you have made good use of it."

"What does it matter to you, sir, what use I have made of it?"

"Not at a', not at a'. Let us come back

to our business. The story is not mine alone, Arthur. It rests on the evidence of the Church. Man tells lies. Church registers are infallible. I suppose that Marie died in England before the second marriage—"

"MacIntyre, do you want me to wring your neck?"

"The facts of the case—the facts of the case only. Your elder brother, sir, received my communication without any of the manifestations of temper which you have shown. Naturally, there is a difference between you."

"You should have told us ten years ago. You should have told us even three months ago. Why did you not?"

"To begin with, I saw no reason for speaking at all, till my friend, as well as old pupil, lost his money. That was yesterday."

"And why next?"

"Because I did not choose."

This was the only outward mark of resentment at Arthur's suspicions which the sage allowed himself. He gave a long sniff of satisfaction, and went on.

"There may be a weakness in the evidence. The law might be evaded by a crafty counsel. You can fight the question, if you like. But the *right* of the case will remain unaltered. Arthur Durnford, you are only the second son of your father."

Arthur was silent for awhile, leaning his head on his hand.

"Come into the City with me. Do you object to bring your papers to my lawyer's?"

"Not at a', not at a'. Let us go at once," answered MacIntyre, apparently in great good humour. "And don't be overmuch cast down, Arthur, at this temporary revairse of circumstances. Philip will give you enough to live upon. If not, there are several lines of life open to you. You may be a private tutor, like me. Then, indeed, my example will not have been wholly in vain."

He pursued this theme as they drove into the City in a cab, illustrating his position by reference to passages in his own life, wherein he had imitated the magnanimity of Themistocles, the clemency of Alexander, the continence of Scipio, and the generosity of Cæsar.

"Poor I may be," he said, "and certainly am; but at least I can reflect—the reflec-

tion alone is worth a bottle of Isla whisky—on temptations avoided and good effected. I forgive you, Arthur, for your hard words; and remain, as I always have been, your best friend."

Arthur answered little, and that in monosyllables. He was so much pre-occupied, that the man's prattle dropped unheeded on his ears.

What was the right thing to do?

The lawyer heard what Arthur had to say, read the documents carefully—from time to time casting a furtive glance on MacIntyre, who sat with an air of great dignity, and even virtue, in his countenance, and occasionally rubbed his nose.

"You are the only surviving witness, Mr. MacIntyre?"

"I am," returned our Alexander. "That is, the only one, I believe, surviving. 'Flesh is grass.' The priest was younger than myself; but, you see, he is gone first. Adolphe might be found, perhaps, though I think he is dead too."

"It is now twenty-seven years since this marriage, according to your certificate, was contracted. Would you kindly tell us more about it?"

"With pleasure. It took place in Mr. Durnford's own house at Fontainebleau, in the dining-room. You remember our lessons—those delightful lessons—which used to take place in the dining-room, Arthur? It's vera sweet to recall old days. It was in the evening. Marie left her mistress's house in the afternoon. No one knew where she had gone except myself. I helped her to escape."

"Oh!" said the lawyer, "you acted—as the uncle of Cressida. It was a creditable position for you to occupy."

"Perhaps," said MacIntyre, with all that was left of his power of blushing mantling to his nose—"perhaps. The necessities of the stomach have on several occasions obliged me to take part in actions of which my conscience disapproved. The needy man has no choice. I approve the better cause, even when fate, armed with the weapon of hunger, has obliged me to follow the worse. In the words of the Latin poet—I hope, sir, you have not wholly neglected the Humanities—'*Dum meliora probo*'—"

"My dear sir," interrupted the lawyer, "pray get on with your story."

"Marie required a good deal of persuading," he went on, gaining courage as

he began to unfold his web of fiction. "Mr. Durnford—a young man at the time—had conceived a violent passion for her. She was as white as a European, and had no marks at all of her descent, except her full black hair. Her mother, indeed, was a mulatto, and perhaps her father was a white man—I don't know. On the evening when I drove her over to Fontainebleau, I had got Father O'Callinan to ride up in the afternoon. He knew what he was to do. It was promised to Marie; and there, in the sitting-room, with myself and Adolphe, a half-blood brother of Marie, who was sworn to secrecy, the marriage was performed, and these papers signed. A year and a half later, after her boy was born, Marie went away to Europe, and Mr. Durnford married Mademoiselle Adrienne de Rosnay."

"And pray, how did the papers come into your hands?"

MacIntyre for a moment hesitated, and a violent effusion of red mounted to his nose.

"After the death of Mr. Durnford, I went through his papers."

"As a legally appointed agent?"

"No. As a confidential friend of the family, in which I had been a tutor for many years."

"In other words, you ransacked my father's desk?" asked Arthur.

"Do not put an injurious construction on the proceeding," said MacIntyre. "I searched the drawers for some papers of my own, and found not only my own private documents, but also these letters."

"Oh!" said the lawyer. "Dear me! Would you be good enough to step outside? Stay, though, what has become of—of—Marie?"

"She went to Europe, and was lost sight of. I suppose she died."

"Thank you," said the lawyer, opening the door. "You will find the papers in the next room. Mr. Thompson, pray give this gentleman the *Times*. Now, Mr. Durnford, this is an ugly case. Tell me what you know of this man."

Arthur told him everything.

"He is evidently a rogue. And I believe that the whole thing is a forgery. Do you know your father's handwriting?"

"Yes; the letters are his."

"Well, well, it may be. Still, observe that in the only place where the word Marie occurs, the writing looks to me uncertain,

and the word laps over beyond the line. It may possibly have been put in afterwards. The dates now. Are you sure that these are in the same writing as the letters?"

"They look so. Besides, there is the church register."

"Registers *have* been tampered with, especially in novels. But what does the man mean by it all: the secrecy for ten years—the suddenness of the revelation? *What does he get for it?*"

"Philip, I am sure, would not pay for his secret."

"Humph! I don't know. The church register is the only thing to fear. Fight it, Mr. Durnford."

"It is not the winning or losing," Arthur replied. "That seems the least part of it."

The lawyer stared at him.

"To Philip it means legitimacy. He *must* fight."

"My dear sir, it *may* also mean legitimacy to you."

"I think not. I am *quite* sure that my father would not have married a second time, except with the clearest proof of his first wife's death. That is to me a conviction. I have nothing to fear on that ground. But there is another thing. How can I drag my father's life and character into open court?"

"Would you sacrifice everything for the mere sake of hiding scandals five and twenty years old?"

"If they are my father's, yes."

"Well, well—let us see."

He went into the outer office, and requested permission to see the papers again, holding them up to the light to see the watermark. Mr. MacIntyre watched him steadily, with a twinkle in his eye distinctly resembling a wink. The lawyer returned the papers, and went back.

"He's a crafty rascal, at least. The watermarks are all right. Mr. Durnford, there is villainy in it. Do nothing rashly."

"Philip will press on the case. I only begin now to understand what it may mean to him—what the past has been to him. I shall not fight with my brother."

"You will acknowledge everything?"

"No," said Arthur, straightening himself, as one who is doing a strong thing, "I shall hide everything. I may be a coward, but I *will not* have my father's name hawked about in public, and the story of his youth—and—and—perhaps his sins, told to the whole

world. Let Philip have all the money. I retire. Let Philip have all the money. I shall not starve, I dare say."

"Nonsense, nonsense. As your lawyer, I protest against it. My dear sir, the time for Quixotism has passed away. People will ask questions, too. What will you say?"

"Nothing. Let them ask what they please. The secret is mine—and Philip's—and this man's. Not one of us will speak of it."

"As for Mr. MacIntyre, certainly not—provided his silence is bought. Will your brother buy it?"

"I shall not ask. I should excuse him if he did."

"Take advice, Mr. Durnford, take advice."

"I will take advice. I will put the whole facts into the hands of a third person, and be guided by the counsel I get from her."

"If it is a lady," the lawyer returned, laughing, "I give you up. But come and see me to-morrow."

Arthur went out by the private door, forgetting all about Mr. MacIntyre, who still sat behind the *Times*, waiting. The time passed on—an hour or two—before the lawyer came again into the outer office. Perhaps he kept his man waiting on purpose, after the sweet and gentle practice of a Bismarck, "letting him cook in his own juice."

"What!—you there still, Mr. MacIntyre? I thought you gone long ago, with Mr. Durnford. Come in again—come and have a glass of sherry. Now, then, sit down—sit down. We are men of business here, and shall soon understand each other. You will find that, Mr. MacIntyre, if you are a judge of sherry, and I have no doubt you are a very excellent judge"—

"Pretty well—pretty well. I am better at whisky."

"Aha! very good—very good, indeed. Reminds me of a thing I once heard said. But never mind now. Let me give you another glass. Dry, you observe, but generous. A fat wine. A wine with bone and muscle. I knew you'd like it." He sat down opposite his visitor, clapped him on the knee, and laughed. "And now let us talk about this affair which you have been the means of bringing to light."

"Under Providence."

"Quite so. Under Providence, as you

say. You know, I feel for Arthur Durnford's position in this case."

"I am but an instrument," said MacIntyre, with a solemn face and another pull at the sherry—"a vera humble instrument. But life is so. The moral philosopher has often called attention to the curious way in which our sins become pitfalls for our children. I could give you some striking passages indirectly bearing upon the point from Stewart and Reid. But perhaps, Mr.—I forget your name—you are not a parent?"

He crossed his legs, and brought the tips of his fingers together.

"Another time, my dear sir, another time. By the way, is it not *rather* unusual for an Englishman to marry a mulatto?"

"Most unusual. Nothing ever surprised me so much. I have often observed, in my progress through life, that—"

"Yes. The circumstance will tell in court."

Mr. MacIntyre visibly started.

"You will go into court?"

"Doubtless," returned the lawyer, watching his man—in whom, however, he saw no other sign of emotion—"doubtless. Your own evidence will be the main chain, so to speak. I hope you don't mind cross-examination."

"When a medicine, however disagreeable, has to be taken, it must be taken."

"Quite so. They will probably inquire into all your antecedents—eh?—ask you all sorts of impudent questions—ha! ha! Whether you ever got into trouble? We, the lawyers for our side, will make it our business to hunt up everything about you."

"What trouble?"

"Into the hands of the law, you know—eh? Oh! most absurd, I assure you. I remember a similar case to this, when the principal witness was obliged to confess that he had sold his information. The case was lost, sir—lost by that simple fact. Now, you see, what an ass that man was! Had he gone to the lawyers of the other side, a respectable firm like ours—had he come to me, for instance, in a friendly way, and said 'My dear sir, I have certain papers—I am a needy man. There they are. We are men of the world.' Had he, in fact, behaved as a man of sense, he would have been, sir—for in losing the case he lost his reward—he would have been"—here the speaker

looked sharply in the face of Mr. MacIntyre—"a thousand pounds in pocket."

He remained stolid—only helping himself to another glass of wine.

"Vera good thing, Mr. — really, I have not caught your name."

"Never mind, sir—never mind my name. It is on the door plate, if you wish to read it. But your opinion now as to my man's stupidity."

"Well, you see—it may be, after all, a question of degree. I am myself induced to think, that if you had offered him ten thousand, he might have accepted. Money down, of course."

The cool audacity of this indirect proposal staggered the lawyer. He put the stopper in the decanter of sherry, and rose.

"I should like to see you again, Mr. MacIntyre."

"Mr. Arthur has gone to see Philip. Do you know Arthur Durnford, sir?"

"I believe I do."

"Not so well as I do. I will tell you something about him. He is ready to do anything that he thinks honourable, even to strip himself to the last shilling; and he is jealous that no word should be breathed against his father. He is now gone to consult Miss Madeleine. I know what her advice will be."

"Well?"

"And do you know Philip? No—not so well as I do. I left him a ruined man. That you know, perhaps. He will do anything for money when it is wanted to save his honour. He wants it now for that purpose. And he would do anything in the whole world to remove the stain of illegitimacy and black blood. The latter is impossible. The former can now be arranged. Ten thousand pounds, sir? Good heavens! If an estate is worth more than four thousand a year, and if you have got three times ten thousand accumulated—Do you know the story of the Sibyl, Mr.—really, I forget your name. Never mind. You remember the story, sir? Probably you had *some* humanities when you were a boy. She came back, sir, again and again; and the third time her price was three times that of her first."

"In point of fact, Mr. MacIntyre, you want to sell your information for ten thousand pounds. It is a disgraceful—"

Mr. MacIntyre started, and opened his eyes.

"The absence of the reasoning faculty in

England is vera wonderful. Man! I was talking of general principles. I was giving you my opinion on the creature that would not sell his information. I would have you to know, sir, that I am not in the habit of selling anything. I am a Master of Arts, sir, of an ancient and honourable Univairsty—the Univairsty of Aberdeen. And I wish ye good morning, sir."

He put on his hat, and stalked away with dignity.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ARTHUR went to Madeleine for advice, being one of those who, when they have made up their minds to a line of action, are not satisfied without being fortified in their design by their friends.

He called after dinner, and found the two ladies alone—Mrs. Longworthy asleep, and Madeleine reading.

"Coming in here," he said, in a low voice, "is like coming into a haven of repose. You are always peaceful."

"Yes—a woman's conflicts are below the surface, mostly. And my own troubles lie two miles away, as you know. When are you really going to make up your mind to come and help us?"

"What am I to do? Teach science again?"

"No; lecture—start clubs—give concerts, you play very well—write tracts—do all sorts of things that will help the people to raise themselves."

"I am afraid I should not do for it, Madeleine. But I will try to join you. Only first give me your advice on a very serious matter."

He told his story.

"Your father married to a mulatto girl? Arthur, it is impossible."

"So I should have said; but it seems true. There are the certificates of marriage, duly signed and attested. And not by the man MacIntyre himself, or we might suspect them; but by a legal firm of Palmiste. You know them. There can be no doubt whatever. And Philip is my brother."

"I always knew it," murmured Mrs. Longworthy, waking up to enjoy her lazy triumph. "I told you, Arthur, that your father had no brothers."

"I suppose," Arthur continued, "that by some accident this mulatto girl, my father's first wife, died early, and that on hearing of her death my father married again. But

MacIntyre knows nothing of this: he only knows that Marie—we will go on calling her Marie—went away to England.”

“And the result of the whole?”

“Would be, if the claim were substantiated, that I have nothing: I am a beggar. All the estate, and all the accumulations, go to Philip.”

“Have you seen Philip?”

“Not yet. I shall go and see him in the morning. I have not seen him for more than four months. You know we were three months in Italy. But I have heard one or two stories about him. I am afraid he has lost money betting.”

“What are you going to do?”

“The lawyer says fight. What ought I to do, Madeleine?”

“Fighting means further exposure of old scandals, and raking up private histories which may as well be left buried. Is there no middle way?”

“None. Either he is the rightful heir, or I am. To poor Phil it means not only fortune, but also legitimacy. I know now—I have known for some little time—what it is that has made Phil what he is. It is not the love of that fast life to which he belongs, so much as his constant sense of his birth, and the tinge of the black blood. Can you not understand it, Madeleine?”

“But if the certificates are correct, and not forgeries, there can be no doubt whatever of the thing.”

“There can be none—Philip is the heir.”

They were silent for awhile—Mrs. Longworthy only giving to the group that feeling of repose which is caused by the long breathing of one who slumbers.

“If it will make you work, Arthur,” whispered Madeleine, “it will be a good thing for you. Let it go, my friend; let your brother take it, and raise no further questions about your father’s private history. It may be all a forgery, put together by that creature, your Scotch tutor: only be very sure that Philip knows nothing about it. Go out into the world, and work with other men. It will be better for you. Or come and work with me.”

“That is impossible, Madeleine,” he whispered—“except on one condition.”

She flushed scarlet for a moment, and then she answered directly, and to the point.

“I know what your condition is. We have known each other so long, Arthur, that I am afraid.”

“What are you afraid of?”

“I am afraid that our old brother and sister feeling may be all that you can have for me.”

“Listen a moment, Madeleine. When I saw you first—I mean six months ago—I was afraid of you. You were so queenly, so beautiful, so unlike the child I loved so many years ago. When I came here day after day and found you always the same—always kind, thoughtful, sisterly—the old feeling arose again, and I felt once more that, as of old, we were brother and sister. But when I was with you abroad, when we were together every day, and all day, that feeling died away again, and another has sprung up in its place. Madeleine, I cannot work with you as you wished, because I love you. If you were another girl, if I did not know you so well, I should make fine speeches about coming to you as a beggar, now that I have lost all my money. But you do not want these. Let me go, or bid me stay. But, Madeleine, whatever you do, do not let me lose your friendship.”

“You are sure you love me, Arthur?” she murmured, between her lips—her eyes softened, her cheek glowing.

“Am I sure? Do you know that I have sprung into new being since I found I loved you? My blood flows faster, my life has quickened. I can feel, I can hope. Madeleine, I can work. Before, what was my very existence? It was life without life, light without sunshine, work without a purpose, days that brought neither hope nor regret. Do I love you, Madeleine!”

“Then, Arthur,” she whispered, leaning forward so that her lips met his, “I have always loved you. Take me, I am altogether yours.”

It was then that Mrs. Longworthy showed the real goodness of her heart. She had been awake for some moments, and was taking in the situation with all her eyes. Now she rose, and gathering her skirts round her, she swept slowly out of the room, remarking as she went—

“You will find me in the dining-room, my dears, as soon as you have done talking.”

They sat and talked together, hand in hand, of the life that they would lead, of

the perfect confidence there should be between them, of all high and sweet things that a man can only tell to a woman. Young fellows whisper to each other something of their inner life—it can only be done between eighteen and twenty-two—and ever after there is a bond of union between them that is always felt, if not acknowledged. Sometimes, too, at night, on the deck of a ship when the moonlight is broken into ten thousand fragments in the white track, and the stars are gazing solemnly at us with their wide and pitying eyes, men may lay bare the secrets of their soul. One of the many whom I have known—he is ten thousand miles from here—in my wanderings abroad—I spent six months beneath the same roof with him—was wont to rise at dead of night, and pace the verandah for an hour or two. If you heard him, and got up to join him, he would *talk* to you. The memory of his talk is with me still. I remembered it in the morning, but he did not. Which was the real man, which was the false, I never knew. One lived by day, and one by night. I think the man of the night—he who showed me his thoughts—was the true man. He is the one whom I love to recall.

While they talked, Mrs. Longworthy slumbered by the table in the dining-room.

Outside, Laura was wandering in the cold and pitiless streets.

At the house at Notting-hill, Philip and MacIntyre were drinking together—Philip to drown his excitement, which had absolutely driven Laura, for the time, out of his head; Mr. MacIntyre, to drown his anxiety. If he lost this stake! But it looked like winning.

Between the two were a couple of champagne bottles, empty. At stroke of ten MacIntyre rang the bell for tumblers. At twelve, Philip went to bed too drunk to speak. At one, Mr. MacIntyre fell prone upon the hearth-rug, and slumbered there. In the morning, at seven, he awoke, and, finding where he was, got up, rubbed his nose thoughtfully, and went home to Keppel-street.

"It's wonderfu'," he remarked when he got back to his lodgings and sat down to breakfast, "what a restorer is the morning air. When I go down to Scotland, I shall always get up early to shake off the whisky

of the night. Elizabeth, my lassie, I think you may bring me another rasher of bacon."

FACTS ABOUT FIGURES.

IT occurred to me lately, in connection with the coming-in of a new year, to reflect on one of the minor benefits conferred on mankind by Christianity, in that it has given the world an almost universal system of dating the years. Anno Domini is a most convenient convention, understood by all civilized persons. It is a method not likely to be upset in a hurry, even by French Red Republicans, who, with national vanity, object to the basing of dates on an event external to French history, and try to talk of the year so-and-so of the Republic. The world is not so easily led to sacrifice its convenience to a theory. Even sceptics, who care little personally for the Birth at Bethlehem, cannot help acknowledging such names as the sixteenth or the nineteenth century, names founded on that event.

How painfully awkward it would be if all the systems of reckoning time that have ever prevailed were still in vogue! The year just past, for example, 1872, is 5876 according to the vulgar reckoning of years of the world. By the old Roman reckoning, it is A.U.C. 2625. In the very cumbrous method of the ancient Greeks, it is the 662nd Olympiad. In the Mahometan estimation—probably the most widespread after the Christian method—it is the year 1250 after the Hegira. Take any particular day—say March 10. It is recognized as such all over Western Europe; but Russia follows the old style, and counts it February 28. The ancient Roman, with his very unhandy calendar, writes it VI. Id. Mart., the sixth day before the Ides of March. The classical Athenian would have seen in it some day in the latter part of the month Gamelion—what exact day it is hard to say; and, indeed, the solution of the problem for any modern date would require at least two first-rate astronomers to make independent calculations, and then compare notes, and check off each other's errors. The very name of March to us connotes the third month of the year; but to the Roman it was the first. So it was to the Jew—at least, approximately, and as regarded the religious year; but his civil year began with Tisri, or September. The Greek

varied from time to time. Once his year began with the 16th of July; then it was put a month or so later. To take a great leap to a distant but, in many respects, highly civilized people, the ancient Peruvians, whose calendar made the *huata*, or year, consist of twelve *quilla*, or months, began it in December; and March, or part of it, was their fourth month, called by the extremely euphonious name of "Paccari Huañuy."

Adam Smith has said that the art of correctly and conveniently managing large numbers is one of the most difficult to the human mind. It has been suggested, as a sign of the higher civilization of the northern over the southern inhabitants of India, that the Dravidian languages have original words to express every number up to a thousand; but for higher ones borrow from the Sanscrit. To obviate possible criticism, it is as well to say that I do not, in quoting this remark, intend to offer any opinion for or against the Aryan origin of the Dravidian races—a question just now agitated by philologists and ethnologists. If some learned men are right in their conjectures, most nations, in the days of hoar antiquity, were very far behind these Dravidians. The existence of a dual number has been held to show that, in the infancy of language, men had no words whereby to distinguish the differences of numbers beyond two. It certainly is remarkable how many languages, not otherwise akin, have this dual number. Of yet spoken tongues, Lithuanian, Arabic, and Basque may be named as examples, belonging as they do to the three main families of language—Aryan, Semitic, and Turanian. From examination of the most ancient of known forms in Sanscrit and Zend, the learned Bopp decided that numerals originated with pronouns, as though mankind began by pointing to this and that and those, and then gradually shaped these pronouns into numerals. Further, he is of opinion that one and two were distinct words; but that three had for its radical signification the next to two, and similarly of other numbers.

Most nations have, more or less perfectly, followed a decimal system. Nature seems to have taught her children almost instinctively to count with their fingers. Hence it has been thought by some that the very word *finger* is connected with the root of five, and *digit* with ten. In counting on

the fingers, it may be observed that some people are in the habit of using both hands, others only one.

The one method contains the root of the denary scale; the other of the far less common and less convenient quinary. There are a few traces to be found of the third natural scale—the vicenary, derived from the number of fingers and toes taken together. If any nation ever did follow out the vicenary system, we may be sure that their toes were more agile than ours are wont to be, not cramped and deformed by wearing boots. Results of treating twenty as a base are seen in the English expression "a score," and the French "quatre-vingt." It is very remarkable that, though every nation of the civilized world has more or less, whether in ancient or modern times, adopted ten as its standard, not one in forming its numerals has been perfectly consistent. Especially have most languages a difficulty in getting over eleven and twelve without a sacrifice of consistency. Whether eleven means one-ten, or one-left-over, it is clear that we have gone to a different root for the first syllable. And both these numerals are formed on a different plan to thirteen, &c. The French are far less symmetrical. From eleven to sixteen, they are content to hint at the element ten by the termination *-ze*. Then they transpose, and proceed with the ten first.

Twenty to sixty are pretty much on one model; but seventy changes, and eighty is vicenary. However, *septante* is quite a common provincialism,* and I believe *oc-tante* has been found. The Spanish *diez y seis* (sixteen) interrupts our numeral sooner than the French; *setenta* and *ochenta* are regular. The plan of the German numerals is so nearly that of the English, that only one remark need be made. If Bopp is right, the English *-ty* in twenty, &c., is not ten, but a Sanscrit suffix. In that case we are nearer to the original Aryan than are the Germans in *zwan-zig*. I make the remark with extreme diffidence, but, as a true-born Briton, eagerly grasp at any and every sign that our language, even in its Teutonic element, is not a mere derivative of the German. Turning to the Latin numerals, we find eleven and twelve formed with almost perfect regularity; only *undecim* is formed from the

* In Normandy, Gascony, Savoy, &c.

root of *unus*, *duodecim* by joining the ordinary form of the second numeral to the modified termination *decim*. All goes smooth to seventeen; then we have a new form, *duodeviginti*; eighteen is *undeviginti*. It is remarkable that this hardly differs from the Sanscrit, *unavinshati*. The Greeks form eleven and twelve on a different pattern to thirteen, &c., omitting the conjunction in the one case, inserting it in the other. Their thirteen is compounded, rather absurdly, with the adverb, thrice and ten. Their eighteen and nineteen accord with ours rather, and differ from the Sanscrit and Latin pattern. Their twenty and thirty have a different termination. One more language I will refer to. In Turkish there is a trace of the quinary scale. One to five are monosyllables;* six to nine, dissyllables and compounds. For the rest they follow the denary scale learnt from the Arabs. Eleven and twelve are perfectly regular, and so on to twenty. Here another remnant of quinary influence. Twenty to fifty are words having no connection with the simple numerals, but sixty to ninety are modified from six, &c., to nine. Something of the same kind has been observed, I believe, in the numerals of certain South Sea Islanders, perhaps not wholly disconnected with similarity of origin. Max Müller, if I mistake not, counts these languages akin to the Turanian stock, of which Turkish is the usual example, though surely many Turkish forms approach *very closely* to inflection.

From numeration we pass to notation. Here we owe our perfectly decimal system to some unknown Oriental benefactor of very early date. We talk of "Arabic numerals," because we learned the system from Spanish Moors in the twelfth century; but it is supposed to have been used in Hindostan in præ-historic times. Considering the early intercourse between the East and West, it is strange that so convenient a method did not much earlier supplant the awkward notation of the Greeks and Romans. Among the latter, a confusion is evident between the denary and quinary scales. Thus V, standing for five, introduces a new series; and so does L for fifty, and again D for five hundred. The origin of these letters has been

much disputed. The first chapter of "Girdlestone's Arithmetic" gives a hypothesis to account for them. It is cumbersome, and appears to me highly improbable. I shall suggest a much simpler one. The single stroke naturally represented the number one, and as naturally was written I. This was repeated as long as human patience could endure; but at the fifth stroke, injured nature revolted and joined the two outside strokes downwards, thus forming a V. The fact of this falling in with the still lingering weakness for the quinary scale, encouraged and established what was first an innovation. By and by, a reformer hit on a happy expedient of putting a stroke before the V to indicate five *minus* one, or four. The next four numerals formed a second quinary series, and the double V made an X. Reform now placed an I before the X to make nine. Decimal notation resumed its march till it arrived at a portentous row of four Xs. Then it could stand no more. The quinary scale came to its aid, and suggested L, perhaps as the middle letter of the alphabet. The decimal-quinary method proceeded to a hundred, and common sense wrote down C, as the initial letter of *centum*, M of *mille*; and at a later period D stood for *dimidium*, or half a thousand. Putting side by side the natural tendency to abbreviate lengthy formulæ, and the known leaning of imperfectly civilized peoples to the quinary scale (witness Turks and South Sea Islanders), I contend that this is an extremely rational and probable explanation.

The Greek system narrowly missed stumbling on the principle of local value; in fact, their numbers are so arranged up to ninety-nine, where, unfortunately, they went off on a wrong tack, and took a quite fresh letter to represent a hundred. The older system of using the initials of one, five, ten, &c., confirms the theory above stated as to the origin of the Roman numerals, than which it was somewhat more symmetrical. If the common Greek system was much later than the initial one, it is very remarkable that they should have employed in it such primitive signs as the three letters Digamma, Koppa, and Sampi. Query: Is Mr. Girdlestone right in identifying this last with the Hebrew Zain, and is it not rather the Samech and the Arabic Ssád, hard or double s? It can hardly be more than a coincidence, and yet it is a strange coincidence, that our figure of one should so strongly re-

* It is true that *'iki* (two) is apparently a dissyllable, but it is not a compound like the later numerals, and, indeed, the middle letter is hardly more than a breathing.

semble the Roman I, seeing that the Roman as a *letter*, if not as a numeral, is traceable up through the Greek to the Hebrew Yod, and our *i* through the Arabic to Alif, the same in power with the Hebrew Aleph, though very different in character. Certainly, in those old days, the learning of arithmetic must have been a hard task. Greek and Roman schoolboys had no need of the rule of three and fractions to puzzle and drive them mad. A good, long, simple addition sum, not enough to perturb the most timid candidate in one of our competitive examinations, must have been enough to addle the brains of a boy of only ordinary stupidity. No wonder that in every period of ancient history, sacred and profane, we find inextricable confusion existing about dates, genealogies, and all questions involving large dimensions. No wonder that venerable Solon, or his equally venerable historian, Herodotus, attempting most rashly to calculate the exact number of days in those seventy years which David and Solon alike allot to human life, fell into blunders over the increment of the intercalary months, which would have plucked either of them under Mr. Lowe's revised code in the first standard of a national school—blunders which no conjectural emendations of text have been able, or will be able, to rectify. Light lie the earth on him who invented the complete system of decimal notation and local value—a useless prayer, we fear, as he has probably, according to Hindoo belief, undergone many hundred transmigrations ere now.

Would that it were possible to supplement these notes on quinary and denary scales by some explanation of the Peruvian "quipu!" If we may believe Don Pedro de Cieza de Leon, whose interesting account of Peru was translated by the Hakluyt Society, it was a very accurate method of expressing calculations. The accounts of the royal revenues were regularly kept in it. All we know, unfortunately, is that the quipu consisted of different-coloured threads twisted together and knotted. Specimens have been found in ancient tombs, but no European has succeeded in unravelling—not the thread, but its meaning. It is conjectured that the colours, number, and distance of knots, and even the exact manner of twisting, all had their significance to the initiated. Certain Indians, descendants of noble Quichua families, claim to have had

handed down to them the art of interpreting these mystic symbols—a secret which they highly prize and jealously guard. It would have been interesting, were it possible, to compare the system of numeration and notation used by so accomplished a people with those of other nations, especially as the civilization of ancient Peru bears all the marks of home-growth, and therefore of originality and singularity.

A word on the mystical character so widely attributed to numbers, or to certain numbers, will not be unbefitting here. The Pythagoreans of old held that the powers and properties of numbers underlie all other principles of nature, and of true art and science. In later times, the force of particular numbers was associated with the secrets of magic. The Jews formerly, and equally the Turks and Arabs, attached great importance to a seemingly arbitrary arrangement of their alphabet, according to which each letter denoted a number. Great importance was attached to the coincidence of a name and a date. For example, the letters of the word 'Othman, the name of the third Caliph, denote respectively 70, 300, 40, and 50. No doubt Suni and Shiya doctors could explain, each according to his own predilection, the connection between the sum of these numbers and the character or history of the Suni hero. Even in our own day and among ourselves, there are not a few who attach a kind of sacred character to certain numbers. Thus, *three* is connected with the doctrine of the Three Persons of the Godhead. *Seven* has been associated with so many events of sacred history, is in so many ways remarkable, so widely distinguished throughout the world as pre-eminent above other numbers, that we may be pardoned for attaching a certain importance to it, even though science has discarded the seven planets, seven metals, seven senses, and other septenary groups. Volumes might be filled with the disquisitions that have been essayed on the mystical number 666, the key to which, though would-be divines have been hammering away at it for ages, still baffles discovery. Resolution into its factors—a 2, two 3s, and 37—yields no very hopeful result.

The connection of numbers with music is too well known to need illustration. I am inclined to think that the close intimacy of numbers with verse has been rather obscured by our ordinary method of scanning the

classical metres. Some of the most acute scholars consider that the accents, and the number of them, play a far more important part in the metres of a Greek chorus, and hence of the most primitive forms of poetry, than the quantities of the syllables. Without doubt, it was so with the old Roman Saturnian verse and the English ballad metre. Perhaps the only living language whose poetry is scanned by quantity is the Arabic. Their metres, which especially delight in trochees and anapæsts, are as strictly arranged as those of Horace. Nevertheless, in the south-east of Arabia, a measure is found scanned solely by the number of accents and their regular recurrence.

To go into all the other subjects in which numbers play an important part—to dwell on the combining proportions of chemical elements; on the prevalence of four and five in exogenous, and of three in endogenous plants; still more, to investigate the often remarkable numerical relations that appear in astronomy, mechanics, and other branches of applied mathematics—would be tedious. Enough if, in a desultory paper, I have succeeded in setting many well-known facts in a slightly new light, and perhaps in bringing forward a few things not generally known.

LITERARY KICKSHAWS.

SOME sort of quasi-intellectual trifling seems as necessary to a society in an advanced stage of civilization as athletic games are to the natural man, in so many forms do we find it appearing from time to time. These pretty ephemera come forth from amidst the musty tomes of serious literature like butterflies from grubs, flutter through their little day with more or less brilliancy, die when the circumstances which favoured their existence alter, and are soon forgotten. For the most part they consist of puzzles—such as enigmas, charades, rebuses, and all the varied company of riddles; or of such exercises of ingenuity as acrostics, bouts rimés, epitaphs on living friends, or the invention of devices and emblems supposed to be appropriate to these. In the days before a real public of readers existed—when the daily press was a thing unknown, and authors had to fawn upon a patron in order to get a hearing from the world—the latter class of jeux d'esprit afforded excellent opportunities for

delicately insinuated compliments and requests, flattery to superiors and gallantry to ladies. Courtship, in the widest sense of the word, was at that time a real pursuit and occupation, and sometimes the only way to success, whether the object of it were a king or minister, a beauty or a literary patron. But its day is gone by—at least, in the openly expressed form which shocks our modern notions of the dignity of literature, in dedications of works by even the greatest writers of one or two hundred years ago. No one troubling himself any longer to say pretty things, either to ladies or patrons, the befitting vehicles for their conveyance have naturally fallen into disuse. The game of bouts-rimés, however, continued to be a favourite amusement in French salons till well into the present century, though I doubt if its frail being long survived the shock of the businesslike revolution of 1830. It is well suited to the clear and maniable language, and the easy, sparkling wit of our lively neighbours. English people tried to imitate it, because it has always been "the thing" in certain circles to take fashions of dress, manners, and diversions from foreign parts; but I do not think it ever took much hold on society in this country. For the benefit of my younger readers, who may not be acquainted with the method of proceeding, and who may wish to try their hands at it, I explain that it consists in the leader of the company giving to each member of it a set of disjointed rhymes, which he was then and there to fill up with metrical lines as best he could. When a greater degree of elaboration than such a "rapid act" allowed of became fashionable, this tour de force was abandoned, and the rhymes were sent beforehand; the writers bringing their verses at the stated time of meeting, to be read, admired, or criticized by the circle, on pain of a forfeit. The fun was to select rhymes having the smallest apparent connection with each other, and the palm was awarded to him who should bring them into the sonnet or quatrain most easily and unconstrainedly. It is a pretty pastime enough, but requiring more trouble and mental effort than young people nowadays care to give to their amusements.

It was, I believe, among the fine ladies of literary pretensions, ridiculed by Molière as "*Les Précieuses*," that the "*Device*," in ancient times borne by knights on their

shields, was resuscitated, and became a rage; and their admirers employed their leisure in inventing complimentary and appropriate ones, each to be adopted exclusively by her to whom it was addressed. The device consisted of an emblem and a motto; and a happy conceit of this kind is sometimes cited with interest in the correspondence of the period. Lady Morgan gives a pretty one in her novel of "O'Donnell," on a lady of talent and sensibility, but of undemonstrative manners: a watch—motto, "*Cheto fuor commoto dentro.*" A very charming modern one is to be seen on the front of the receiving-house of the Royal Humane Society in Hyde Park: Love, trying to blow in the flame of a nearly extinct torch, with the circumscription—"Latet scintillula fors æro." Before the invention of gummed envelopes, according with the rough and ready mode of penny postal correspondence, and when it was considered almost an insult to send wafered letters among gentle-folks, sealing-wax and seals were in universal use; and these devices became vulgarized by being engraved and sold by thousands on cheap and common seals. Perhaps, however, they may be revived some day, when we get tired of the cyphers and monograms with which we now stamp our letter paper and other possessions.

I have lately seen attempts at epitaphs on living friends, some of which were pointed and epigrammatic; but it is not a form of *jeu d'esprit* that commends itself to my fancy. It is difficult to steer nicely between adulation and censure, to touch on salient characteristics without coming to personalities which may give offence; and there can be no display of wit or gracefulness in those that deal in mere generalities. The Duke of Buckingham's caustic and witty quatrain on Charles II. was near costing him the Royal favour, it is said.

The rebus, properly so called, still reigns supreme in French newspapers, most of which have one of these absurd puzzles as a tail-piece to each impression; but it seems to have languished in this country since the abolition of lotteries, which it was a good deal employed to advertize. Compilers of *Girls' and Boys' Own Books* for Christmas do, indeed, publish therein what, with a sublime indifference to the meaning of the word, they call rebuses, but which might with equal propriety be termed epics! A rebus, as every one who has

learnt the first page of a Latin grammar knows, means a thought represented by things instead of words, like the Egyptian hieroglyphics. I remember to have seen in my childhood some of the leaflets distributed by the agents of the then lately extinct Mr. Bish, of Cornhill Lottery Office, to decoy the simple into his net. They were headed with a figure of a bald man carrying a scythe, and the representation of the wing of a bird, with the words *is on the* inserted between, and the rest of the advertisement was in the same guileless and unambitious style. But this was the infancy of the art, utterly despicable in the eyes of modern French rebus makers, who, not content with puzzling the eye by queer delineations of all manner of incomprehensible things, puzzle the ear also by a sort of extravagant punning familiar to the admirers of English burlesques. Who but a disciple of the school of Messrs. Burnand, Byron, and Co., would guess the interpretation of this hieroglyphic—to wit, a dromedary with outstretched legs, spitted and roasting before a kitchen fire—to be

"Un trop tendre homme a des remords cuisants
(Un tro-Haut-drom-a-daïre mort cuisant)"!?

So welcome, however, is this—to my mind, dullest and poorest—kind of humour, especially to dwellers in the provinces, that I believe the circulation of any French journal that discontinued publishing them would immediately begin to fall off.

In the early part of the present century, the enigma and charade attained a high position in fugitive literature, through many graceful effusions from practised pens which condescended to disport themselves thus. I may instance Miss Fanshawe's matchless enigma on letter H, long believed to be by Lord Byron; the well-known one ascribed to Macaulay on Cod, "parent of softest sounds, yet silent ever;"—and that on Caress—said, with what truth I know not, to be Canning's. I need hardly explain that the difference between an enigma and a charade, as now accepted, is that, in the first case, the puzzle is created by throwing different lights upon the same word, which may also have different meanings; and, in the latter, by separating it into its component syllables, when each of these can make a complete word in itself. In English versified charades, the late W. M. Praed was facile princeps, taking quantity and quality

together. I know of no other who has written so many and so good. They were considered important enough to be incorporated in the collection of his lively, elegant *Vers de Société*, published since his death. In spite of the ruthless denunciation of Sydney Smith, who declares that the charade-maker ought to be hurried off to instant execution, without being allowed time to explain why his second is not like his third, and why his whole is his first, this pleasant kind of literary bubble remains popular, and is likely to do so, more especially as, when put in action, it affords ready subjects for domestic impromptu drama.

By far the drollest kind of riddle, and indeed the only sort I know of, intended to provoke laughter is the conundrum. I shall be obliged to any one who will suggest a derivation or a meaning for the word; but the thing, as we have it, is merely an inverted pun—or rather, a pun led up to by a question. Like puns, however, they often admit of the display of pure wit, if the definition be right which pronounces wit to consist chiefly of *apposition* and *opposition*—in showing the apparent similarity of things essentially different, and the apparent difference in those really similar. Even Sydney Smith, who is so severe upon charades in his “*Essay on Wit and Humour*,” allows this, and quotes as an illustration the joke of a schoolmaster to whom complaint was made that one of the children would persist in reading the word “*patriarchs*” partridges—“Then he certainly ought to be punished, for that is making game of the patriarchs.” Among many conundrums which are not quibbles on the mere sound of a word, but on its double sense, and which, consequently, have a claim to be thought witty, a good specimen is, “Why is sympathy like ‘blindman’s-buff’?” Because it is a fellow feeling for a fellow-creature.” Here the definition fits both to perfection; yet few things can be more unlike than sympathy and a rough game. Equally excellent is that which declares conscience to be like a check-string because it is an inward pull upon the outward man, though it has not the unexpectedness which makes the other so irresistibly funny. This quality, which moral philosophers tell us is a large ingredient in the creation of laughter, is another characteristic of these joking ques-

tions, and is sometimes felicitously blended with satire, as in the following: “When is a man forced to keep his word? When no one will take it.” “What is the surest way to keep a man’s affection? Don’t return it.” There is a little too much of the British domestic tyrant, however, in the one which advises damming a lady’s eyes to stop her tears! A good conundrum, I may observe *en passant*, is none the better for being given as a puzzle; it should be told at once to have its fun thoroughly appreciated. The answer is apt to fall a little flat after the brain has been long cudgelled in vain to discover it. “If you throw a man out of the window, what does he fall against? His will.” And “What metamorphosis do laundresses undergo? Go to bed themselves, and get up fine linen,” seem to me highly humorous examples of their class. As long as there are punsters there will be conundrums; but a batch is no longer regularly served out to us every New Year’s Day as in the bygone times of roan-tuck pocket-books, none of which appeared without its page of riddles, and I fancy the manufacture of them has rather fallen off.

The *soi-disant* double acrostic has, of late, taken an extraordinary place in public estimation, to judge by the quantities published in newspapers, magazines, and in separate volumes, which find a ready sale. In strictness, they are not acrostics, but something compounded of that, the charade and the enigma. The old original acrostic (from the Greek *akros*—first, or foremost) was simply (as defined by Johnson) a copy of verses in which “the first letter of every line being taken, makes up the name of the person or thing on whom the poem is written.” I give the following example, made impromptu on a charming singer, more for its brevity than for any other merit:—

“J oyful to greet thee on this bright spring morn—
A long the breeze melodious notes are borne;
N ow join the descant with thy heavenly voice,
E xcelling all the birds that here rejoice.”

The difficulty is here exclusively to the writer; there is none to the reader. But the maker of the new-fashioned enigmatical acrostic, or acrostical enigma, heaps Pelion on Ossa, and then bids us climb and overcome! Instead of being simply the first letter of each verse, it is the first letter of the thing described in each verse that is to form the word, the final letters making that

which constitutes its double, and which should have some sort of connection with that spelt by the initials. Moreover, the two words to be guessed are described with oracular ambiguity in the preamble, which is often an entire charade in itself; so that one might imagine Dryden, with prophetic foresight, describing what was to come rather than what obtained in his day when he bids a bad poet to—

"Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command
Some peaceful province in acrostick land;
There mayst thou wings display and altars raise,
And torture one poor word ten thousand ways!"

As these "poor tortured words," however, appear to furnish a welcome recreation to so many idlers, invalids, or men of active minds seeking rest from their serious avocations, we are tempted to ask why we have not better ones? It was all very well while we served them up hot and hot, with the ink scarce dry, to overlook slips of the pen, and a foot too much or too little here and there. But when written leisurely, printed and corrected for the press, we may not unreasonably look for a little more care and finish than are usually bestowed on these productions. In too many cases the verses are mere doggerel, halting through two or three different metres, the grammar and English in which they are couched being enough to disturb Cobbett's ghost from its rest. The best collections we have are defaced with such as these, inserted apparently only to make up the volume, side by side with some as pretty and ingenious as anything of Præd's. But even these last are seldom written in his painstaking style. One of the best in the "Dublin Acrostics" (on Peak and Pine) commences thus:—

"The pure and icy midnight air
Exalted while it chilled our veins!"

How the cold air manages to exalt one's veins passes comprehension, and it is not much more intelligible if we suppose the word to be a misprint for excited. A hazy idea of the spirits being braced while the blood was chilled seems to have floated in the author's mind; but he would not take the time and trouble to express his conception clearly. We do not come upon such blots in even the lightest compositions of Præd. His *musa pedestris* always trips jauntily along, and is never footsore or weary.

But besides this too commonly bad out-

ward form, I find another fault in the amount of licence in giving definitions, which results at last in their being no definitions at all. In the "Gross of Acrostics," containing, among many faulty ones, some of the cleverest I have seen, there is a short one in prose, wittily invented, but spoiled by the studied dimness of its miscalled lights. "You may find both in the garden; and if I said I would not sacrifice my first for my second, it might sound rude; but it would only be sound, not sense.

"1. What a fine dog!"

"2. What a good salary!"

"3. What a ridiculous trinket!"

How is it possible to make any but the wildest guesses at the meaning of these ejaculations? When once we have guessed the words to be Fig and Yew (you), we may, indeed, find letters to fit into the initials and finals; but supposing the second to be Income, how is that an answer to "What a good salary!" which must depend upon its amount? The editor of this amusing (and very ill-printed) little volume does indeed seem occasionally troubled with misgivings as to the clearness of some of his data, since he gives explanatory foot-notes!—than which nothing can be more out of place in such a work. Neither can I admit that a vague statement ought to be palmed off upon us as a definition, such as, to choose one example out of hundreds equally wanting in precision—

"The King took his breakfast, and then said adieu,"

for "Tillietudlem." It contains no reference at all to the venue, as lawyers call it, and may just as well represent the words "good-bye," "disjune," or "monarch." The obscurity might have been entirely removed by prefixing the word "here," leaving the place and the allusion to be discovered.

It is nearly a quarter of a century since I was first initiated into these mysteries by the eminent historian, Henry Hallam, from whose pleasant salon in Wilton-crescent they spread over Belgravia like an epidemic. Old and young, male and female, took the acrostic fever. We exchanged them in the street, we left them at each other's doors—nay, the little folded papers were sometimes surreptitiously conveyed from one pocket to another on the very church steps; but it was not till years after that the infection diffused itself over the whole nation. Like croquet, *bé-zique*, and other amusements, which have had

what the French call *un succès fou*, it smouldered long before bursting into general popularity. Our early attempts, if simpler, were for the most part more accurate and logical than those now in fashion. They were generally in prose, which I still think has its advantages. The poet often becomes obscure in the endeavour to force into one line a definition requiring more space, while one which may be given epigrammatically in two or three words is weakened by expansion into the necessary metre. But when sense and lucidity are not sacrificed to rhyme, certainly the poetical ones are the prettiest.

As double acrostics seem to hold their position still, and we may expect to have many more offered to us, I have ventured upon the above strictures, hoping to induce the Acrosticers who are preparing fresh wares for our winter evening diversion, to revise a little more closely what they write or edit. There are two or three simple rules to be observed, if anything like neat work is to be turned out. First of all, that good prose is preferable to bad verse. Next, that the most intricate and involved meanings may and ought to be presented in language that is perfectly clear in itself. Thirdly, that the lights should be real definitions, however cunningly disguised, not wild exclamations or distant allusions, equally applicable to half a dozen different things. Most of all, the author should bear in mind that his object should be not merely to puzzle, but dexterously to lead and mislead his victims through the turnings and windings of the labyrinth he has made, till, if by matching their wits against his they at last find the clue, they may confess that, though a maze, "it was not without a plan," and feel that—

"Surely the pleasure is as great
In being cheated as to cheat."

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—VII.

"NOW, lads," began Bill, the next evening, "as I cannot at present remember a personal adventure of much interest, I will tell you one second-hand, which I have no hesitation in saying is true."

In the ship which, as I told you the other night, picked me up when floating about a waif on the mighty Pacific, the first mate was a pleasant sort of fellow, although

rough in his language and conversation. Thrown much together, we got to be good friends; and many a long evening we spent walking the deck during his watch. Partly from a desire to gain some knowledge of seamanship, and not wishing to lead an idle life, I asked and obtained permission from the captain to be put on the mate's watch, and, for the short time I was on board, took regular duty as a hand before the mast. The life, though rough, was less irksome than having nothing to do; and I rather enjoyed the excitement when it blew fresh enough to give us a little extra work. Accustomed to yachting, I soon became a fair hand, and could run aloft as quickly as the best "A.B." in the ship, and, being anxious to excel, generally managed to be first out on the yard-arm when reefing. This, however, has nothing to do with my tale, excepting that it explains why, although so much of a companion to the mate, I was also rather a favourite with the sailors before the mast, who, seeing I was always ready and willing to take my share of work, and probably feeling I was a step above them in social position, never gave signs of jealousy, and always treated me with a certain amount of rude respect. Night after night, Morgan—the mate was called—and I walked up and down the deck talking, interchanging ideas and relating little incidents which had occurred to each. I soon found that he had seen many curious scenes, and been placed in many dangerous and trying positions, both at sea and on land. In common with nearly all sailors, he hated the sea intensely. Naturally, I asked him, if he disliked it so much, why he stayed on board ship instead of getting something to do ashore.

"Ah, it's all very well to talk," he would reply, "but what am I fit for? Here, I've been at sea nearly all my life, and, knowing nothing of any other life, am totally unable to earn a decent living at anything else. I did once try gold-digging; but although I did fairly well for some time, I soon had bad luck, and lost all I had made. Besides that, I nearly lost my life as well, by being ashore—not by gold-digging exactly. One of these nights I'll tell you all about it, if you choose to listen."

I always was fond of listening to an original yarn told by the person to whom it happened; and so you may be sure I took care to remind him of his promise on the

first opportunity. Not many nights after this conversation took place, we were lying becalmed, and so, having nothing to do, Morgan and I were as usual marching about. It was a splendid moonlight night. The sea, smooth and glassy as a lake, reflected each bright twinkling star on its placid bosom, and the "wake" of the moon looked like a bright golden pathway stretching across the surface of the sparkling ocean. It was just one of those charming nights which are so often seen in southern latitudes, but which are almost unknown north of the line, when the mind, subdued by the quiet and calm peacefulness around, appears to be easily impressed with the romantic or the wonderful. The sun that evening had set in the most gorgeous splendour. The sky shone with the most beautiful colours, ever changing and varying—now deep crimson, now silvery blue, like the inside of a pearly shell. Some of the tints were almost green, and the mirror-like sea reflected every cloud as clearly and perfectly as the originals themselves. All stood gazing with deep admiration, and even the rough natures of the sailors seemed touched and awed with the mighty grandeur of the scene. As the darkness came over us, the bright beauty died away, leaving the dark blue, nearly black sky, with its bright sparkling gems, overhead, and the vast ocean round us reflecting the stars and the moonlight, and flashing with phosphorescent fire.

"Now, Morgan," I said, "let me have your story and your experiences of shore life. This is just the night for a yarn. There's not much chance of our being interrupted in such a complete calm as this. So fire away, old fellow."

"I do not know whether what I am going to tell you will be as interesting to you," he began, "as it was, and still is, to me. And you must be satisfied with my telling it to you in a simple, unvarnished manner, remembering that, as it really happened, I cannot alter or adorn the incidents. As I always think anything in the way of a yarn deserves a title, and that a good name is as desirable for a story as it is necessary to a man, I shall call my tale—

LOST IN THE BUSH.

In the year 1852, I was in the ship *Birman*, bound for Melbourne. At that time I was only an ordinary seaman, and had

made but one voyage previously. Then, as now, I disliked the sea as only a sailor can. But what could I do? At school I had been idle, and more fond of play than work—had learned little, so that I was not fitted for desk work nor for a profession; and having, with a boy's love of adventure, insisted on going to sea, my parents wisely advised me to stick to it, hoping that I should push my way in the end. The result is that here I am, over forty years of age, first mate in a whaler. Certainly, I have saved a few hundred pounds, and, with the good luck we have had this voyage, I hope to be able to buy a share in a ship, and take the command; but I have worked hard for it, and have led a slavish, abstemious life. Our voyage to Melbourne was a long one, owing to the slowness of our ship, and to the number of accidents we met with; so that we did not reach Hobson's Bay until the middle of January, 1853. The gold fields were at that time in full swing, and every man and boy that could manage it had gone to the diggings. As soon as a ship anchored in the bay, her hands, either singly or in a body, left her, so that there were hundreds of vessels lying deserted or only manned by the captains, and perhaps a boy. Our ship was no exception to the general rule; for before we had been a week in harbour, all the hands, tempted by the golden reports we heard of the abundance of the gold, and the ease with which it was to be got, had deserted her and made the best of their way to the "Land of Promise." I and two other boys were among the last to bolt. The captain and officers watched us carefully; and had it not been for an accident, I believe we should not have been able to make our escape. One day, the skipper told us to man the gig, and we had to row him to Sandridge. Another boat, from some ship in the bay, reached the shore just as we did, and our two boats ran on to the gravelly beach close together. No sooner had the other boat grounded than the men in her—numbering some four or five—jumped ashore, and ran off up the beach, closely pursued by the captain. Our "old man," as soon as he saw what it was, gave chase, followed by the second officer, who also was with us. Seeing our opportunity, I proposed to my mates that we should be off at once. Only one agreed with me—the other saying that he would rather take his chance than go now and leave all his "kit"

on board. So we left him, and hurried away, not knowing or caring in what direction we went.

After several narrow escapes from being caught and imprisoned in Melbourne, we joined a party which was starting for Bendigo. For some months we worked there with different success. From there we went to M'Ivor, now called Heathcote, and then our troubles commenced. Not a spec could we find. A few yards from us a party of four were doing wonderfully well, making from £30 to £40 a week each. So, when the Waranga diggings were found out, near the Goulburn, we up stick and made tracks at once. That was a dreadful place. We were amongst the first on the ground. There were no stores to be got, excepting a few small loaves, which were sold at the modest price of eight shillings each. Mut-ton, for the first two days, could not be got for love or money; and even if it could, it was out of our reach; for although we might have had a good supply of the first, we had not a cent of the latter. Water was scarcely to be got fit to drink, although a little was brought from a lake—called, I think, "Calbin Abin"—and was readily sold at half a crown per bucket. The first night we were there I got some—*mud-water*, we called it—in which a digger had been washing his "stuff," to make tea of. The process was troublesome, and not very satisfactory after all. I first strained it through a bit of rag torn off my shirt, then I put it on the fire and boiled it, adding a good handful of tea. Allowing it to stand and settle, we got nearly a pint of liquid out of each quart pot. It certainly looked first-rate tea, as the mud in it gave it the appearance of having milk as one of its ingredients—an unknown luxury on the diggings; but the taste was anything but gratifying, being full of grit, and tasting too strongly of mother earth. This discomfort, of course, only lasted a few days, for with the rapidity usual on gold diggings, a township sprung into existence—a canvas one, certainly, but in which every necessary and many of the luxuries of civilized life were obtainable.

My companion—whose name was Joe—and I remained there for about ten days, not doing very well, but earning more than wages. Then, hearing a report of a new diggings having been found not very far from Waranga, we determined to give up our claim, which was about worked out, and

try our luck in a fresh ground. The place where this new field was said to be was only about ten or twelve miles from Waranga, in a straight direction, but separated from it by a dense "whip stick" scrub, so thick as to be almost impenetrable, even to men on foot. Dark tales were told of men who had tried to force their way through this scrub being lost, and never having been seen again; and as yet no one had been known to have succeeded in finding the way through it. Of course, going round made a considerable difference in the distance; and so, thinking to save this long tramp, and rather liking the idea of trying to succeed where so many had failed, we resolved to attempt pushing our way through to the other side.

A "whip stick" scrub is composed of long, thin, straight saplings; growing so closely together that it is necessary to bend them aside in order to get between them. And as each little tree is well covered with leaves, they form a sort of canopy over head, which excludes the light so much, that even at midday it is almost impossible to see the sun. This, of course, makes travelling more difficult and dangerous than in an ordinary scrub, where, if you are unprovided with a compass, you have the sun to guide you by day and the stars by night. These saplings grow perfectly straight, and without branches, to a height of generally ten or twelve feet; and, as their name implies, are in great request by bullock drivers, who use them for handles to their bullock whips.

The plan we intended to adopt when going through this scrub was simple enough, but very troublesome. With a small tomahawk, one gave a tree a cut, and then bent it down in the direction in which we were going. A few yards farther on, and the same process was repeated. In this way we felt certain that, if we could not find our way to where we wished to go, we could at least return to the spot whence we started.

Early one morning we started, hoping before night to reach our destination. For the first two hours we went on slowly but surely, taking great care to leave plenty of trees laid low as marks. But as we went on the trouble became more and more irksome, and we began to leave a greater distance between them, until at last we found we had lost sight of the chain of communication in many places. Still we felt little or no un-

easiness on this account, for it appeared unlikely that we could lose the line altogether. We were rather disappointed to find that we could not finish our journey that day; but, fully persuaded that we could do so early next morning, we prepared to camp and make ourselves comfortable for the night. We were prudent enough not to use much of the small supply of water we had brought with us, and contented ourselves with washing down our damper and mutton with about half a pint each of tea.

Next day brought us no more success than before, and we began to think we had lost our way. I wanted to return, feeling our way, as it were, by the trees we had cut down; but Joe would not listen to such a thing, insisting that we had only to persevere a little longer and all would be right, and urging that if we went back we should have lost all our trouble and fatigue for nothing. I reluctantly agreed to go on for another day, on condition that we should then return. By that time we should be quite without water and nearly without food; and, travelling at the same pace we had come at, it would take us at least three days to retrace our steps. No better result followed on the third day, and on the morning of the fourth we began to make the best of our way back, greatly disappointed and sadly disheartened by our failure, and anxiously nervous for the future. We found it by no means so easy to find our marks as we had anticipated, and were often in danger of losing the return track altogether. This at last took place; and on the fifth day we found ourselves completely astray, in the heart of the scrub, tired with our long tramp, weak from want of sufficient food, tortured with a raging, burning thirst, and confused and bewildered by the perilous position in which we were placed.

More for the purpose of collecting our scattered senses than for any other reason, we sat down, and, lighting our pipes, began to discuss our plans as calmly as we could. What should we do? To stay here was certain death. And yet, to go on wandering hopelessly forward—probably, as is usual in such cases, walking round and round the same spot in a circle—until, exhausted by fatigue and faint for want of food and water, we sank down to die, seemed the only way in which our sufferings could end. Still, to lie down quietly in despair, waiting through terrible, bitter agony for the end which must

surely but so slowly come, with its long protracted torture, was impossible. The very thought was maddening and intolerable. No; better far to roam frantically, even hopelessly, through the dark, gloomy scrub, until strength failed and reason fled. Better to struggle gallantly to the end, fighting the battle of life and death inch by inch, contending bravely with man's great enemy to the last, still clinging to the feeble hope which lasts as long as life, than to sink down, helpless and hopeless, overcome by horror, madness, and despair. For three more days we struggled on, battling bravely against our cruel fate, and trying to cheer one another, and keep our own spirits up by hopes of yet getting out into the open. Hour by hour we grew weaker, and each moment our torture caused by thirst increased, and we began to take strange ideas into our heads. Often we thought we had at last reached help and safety, and shook hands, laughing and singing with joy. Then the sad reality, with all its horrors, would burst on us, and, weak in mind and body, we found relief in bitter tears. At this period I noticed a strange, wolfish expression in my companion's eyes, and often caught myself gazing at him earnestly, whilst strange, wild, diabolical thoughts occupied my reeling brain. Well I understood his looks and my own cruel thoughts.

We were both longing for the other to die, so that the survivor could feast on his dead companion, and satisfy the terrible gnawing hunger which was raging within us, and seemed to be tearing us to pieces.

"Joe," I said, as we were lying down, trying to obtain a little rest before staggering on again—my voice was shaky now, and I spoke with pain and difficulty—"Joe, old fellow, one or both of us will soon be dead. For my own part, I hope we may both die at the same time. My lad, I know well what your thoughts are, just as you guess mine. What we both desire and long for cannot do us much good, and will but prolong our pain and add to our sufferings. Will you swear with me, by the God before whom we must so soon stand, not to give way to this new horror?"

For answer, he put his poor, thin, worn hand in mine, and, squeezing it as hard as his feeble strength permitted, simply said—"Agreed."

No more words were spoken by either of us on the subject, yet we both felt that the

dreadful horror had passed away; and the knowledge soothed and calmed us more than I have words to express. Half the dread and bitterness of death had fled with those few faintly uttered words.

Each moment growing weaker, we still moved on, clinging to hope as only dying men can; and even when darkness came, spreading night's black mantle over us, we went on hand in hand, feeling our way in and out through the thick forest of saplings.

Often we sat down intending to rest till the morning, but, fevered with thirst and anxiety, we could not keep quiet; and for hours we crept onwards, until at length, completely exhausted, we lay down and fell fast asleep.

When I awoke it was broad daylight, and through the branches and leaves I thought I could see the sun shining. Then I thought I heard the notes of a magpie. Little at first I heeded what I heard, thinking it was but another of the fancies which had so often before deceived me, and which for many hours past had taken possession of and filled my half-crazed brain. But as they grew more distinct, I began to listen, and soon became certain that it was not imagination, but reality. Could it be that in the dark we had wandered close to the edge of the scrub? How else could we hear the sweet, plaintive song of the magpie? Hark! what is that? Is it, can it be, the crack of a bullock whip or a stock whip?

Collecting all my strength, I rose, and tried to rouse Joe. Alas! he was too faint to move, and only muttered something about "Mother—coming home." Could I leave him now to die alone? And yet to stay, even for a few moments, was death to both. Oh, God! were we to perish on the very threshold of salvation, after having struggled on so long? To die now, when within a few yards of help and succour! The thought gave me fresh life and strength; and, with a weak, faltering voice, I coo-eed again and again.

My cry was answered; and soon Joe and I were safe in the care of rough but kind hands—snatched from the very jaws of death. I have nothing more to tell you. Joe and I went back to sea again as soon as we recovered our strength. He is now the captain of a fine ship—a regular trader to Melbourne. I have seen him several times since we parted in 1853. We always talk our adventure over; but neither has

ever alluded to the oath we took in the depth of that dark, dismal scrub.

"Thank you, Bill," said Pat, when Bill stopped speaking. "You have repeated the tale well; and I have not the least doubt of its truth. I know the scrub perfectly well; and so, perhaps, do both Charlie and Harry, as they lived in that part of the country."

"Yes," I replied—"I know it, and it is just what Bill described it. One of the thickest 'whipsticks' I ever saw. I remember hearing of something about two fellows being nearly lost in it shortly after the diggings there broke out; so there is little doubt about the truth of Morgan's story."

"I remember it also," chimed in Stevens. "To-morrow night, on the banks of the Ashburton, I will follow the lead of Pat and Bill, and relate a story told to me. I often wonder whether it is true, or if the fellow who told it to me was mad. I really believe both to be the case. It's a queer tale, anyhow; and, whether true or not, is worth hearing."

"That's right, Stevens," said Pat; "keep the pot a boilin'. The nights don't seem half so long and dreary since we began to spin these yarns. Bill and I pretty well exhaust the subject of the 'Cocoa Islands' scheme through the day; so that we should be at a loss for something to amuse ourselves at night with were it not for Bill's happy suggestion of 'telling tales.' This is the jolliest trip I ever made with cattle in this benighted country, where wood is so scarce and water so plentiful. Good night all. I'm off to take my turn watching."

A HINT FROM LOTHAIR.

CHAPTER I.

AN EVENING PARTY—DANCING.

"IT is pleasant to see the young people enjoying themselves, isn't it?" said Sir Roger Stafford, a full-bodied, full-faced, beaming old gentleman.

"Humph, yes," replied the contemporary he addressed; "but I should like a little reciprocity."

"Come—come, Banks, do not grudge them their turn. We have had our innings, you know."

"That's no reason why we should not have our whist."

"Ha, ha! quite an epigram that, I declare. But I am afraid there is not a quiet corner in the whole house. Never mind; William has got a bottle or two of that sherry you like under the table at the buffet, so don't take the first he offers you. Besides, we shall have supper early. Ah, Mrs. Plastick, how kind of you to promise us a charade, which I am told is the case."

And Sir Roger buzzed away.

It was a Twelfth Night party at his house, and he had to infuse a taste of the hostess into the duties of a host. Not that he was a widower, but because his wife was afflicted with a pleasant malady, which never gave her the slightest pain or discomfort, never interfered with her appetite, never prevented her from doing anything she wished; and yet it obliged her to repose in a very easy chair, and receive her friends like a paralytic. How complex is the human frame! How insidious is disease!

Are you inclined to pity her husband? Pray do nothing of the kind. She had a beautiful temper, never thwarted him, let him think that he ruled the household—and he liked that. Then she had brought him, from first to last, thirty thousand pounds; also a charming daughter, pretty as a rosebud—I like original similes—dutiful as the heroine of a goody book, as innocent as a lamb, and a great pet.

It was her nineteenth birthday, and the party was in her honour, and a very merry affair it appeared to be. Though by no means a juvenile entertainment, a sprinkling of young ladies not yet "out," and of young gentlemen but three parts educated, gave an excuse for louder laughter and a more romping style of dancing than is permissible at a regular ball, where the business is thinly disguised by a veil of pleasure. It is pleasant to see the young people enjoying themselves; so we will look at one or two somewhat closer, and share their joy sympathetically.

Susan Stafford should have been the most comfortable and contented of the party. Every man and boy, and a fair proportion of girls present, admired her. She had not an ache or a pain in the whole of her sound, healthy little body, or an envious thought in her maiden mind. The festivities were in her honour: she was Queen of the night.

But why was she not dancing? The piano had been jingling, the harp twanging, the cornet-à-piston tootling, and the waltzers whirling round the room for the last five minutes; and yet she sat demurely by the side of Mrs. Ochre—whose complexion gained little advantage from the contiguity—listening to a long story about an ex-cook who had taken a liberal view of the perquisite question. Had Susan helped her fair guests to all the partners, and left none for herself? No, she was engaged for that dance—as, indeed, for a more serious pas-de-deux—to Timothy Conybeare, and Timothy was so absorbed in an interesting conversation in an adjoining apartment with Professor Sands, that he ungallantly failed to notice that the music was inviting him to twirl his betrothed about. This want of enthusiasm could not but offend any beauty, however easy of temper; and though she was not exactly in love with the man she was to marry, Susan was none the less ruffled by such evidence of his being equally sound of heart. What vexed her a good deal more than Timothy's negligence, however, was the fact of Percy Conybeare's not having asked her to dance at all, which was very un-future-brotherly of him. Nor had he Timothy's excuse of possessing a soul above frivolity; for he was kicking up his heels vigorously enough with other partners, his laugh was frequent, his visits to the buffet periodical. It was the first time that he had ever neglected his little playfellow—as she had been such a few years ago; and they had had no quarrel. It was really very unkind—on her birthday, too.

Somehow we have made a bad choice. This young person does not seem to have been enjoying herself very particularly. Let us try another—Percy Conybeare himself, for example. He seemed jolly enough, and was rattling out any nonsense that came first into his head; but what passed unspoken in his heart at every pause? Something like this—

"I wish my regiment was going abroad. I wish there was a war. I wonder what she thinks of my keeping away. Shall I go? She will think—no, hang it! what does it matter what she thinks? I must come out of that. It's all stuff—Tilly Beamish is a far finer girl, and talks better. Pooh, I'm an ass!"

The enjoyment of young person number two does not seem to have been quite un-

alloyed either. We will not give it up yet, however. Let us try a third—that silky young man with black hair parted in the middle, say, who was leaning over his partner in a pause of the dance, apparently giving her a botanical lecture in a very low, soft tone, as he touched one after another of the flowers and ferns of her bouquet. Nick Foley, of Somerset House, was supposed to be always happy when his handsome features and symmetrical figure were set off to their best advantage—when boys were envying and women admiring his dress and dancing; so content was due to him now. He was really good-looking, a very good dresser, a wonderful waltzer, and endowed with strong powers of ingratiating himself with those in whose good graces he wished to stand, whether men or women.

What was passing in his mind while dowagers thought he was “spooning” Miss Incepeddy?

“Curse my luck! A chance missed! The idiot, who would be a pedant if he had an ounce of brains, has forgotten his engagement, and she is sitting out. And here am I chained to this confounded milk and water schoolgirl.”

Not enjoying himself at all. Another very bad shot. I give up trying to test or weigh enjoyment.

It was Professor Sands who first said to Timothy—

“Why, here am I keeping you listening to talk about Semitic inscriptions, when you are wanting all the time to beat the ground with your free foot!”

And Timothy Conybeare awoke to the fact that he was offending seriously against the common rules of politeness, and went to claim his partner.

The young man had a very superior opinion of himself, which is not altogether a disadvantage; but he showed it, which is. His hair was straw-coloured, his nose and chin had an upward tendency, his form was slim. He had no particular virtues; in short, he was a passionless prig, and looked it. Now a prig should be clever, and a man with a chilly heart ought to have a very well furnished head; but the gentleman under dissection was far duller of intellect than the majority of us—and, between ourselves, that is saying a good deal. He had a good memory, which kept both himself and his friends in constant hope that he was becom-

ing wise; but he wasn't. I knew of a man once who had not the slightest ear for music, and yet learned to play on the piano, and acquired a marvellous power of execution. He derived no pleasure whatever from the performance, but took music up as he would have done a puzzle, or a figure in skating, or the colouring of a pipe. Well, Timothy Conybeare went in for all sorts of arts and sciences in a similar manner. He could not comprehend them; but he could try. He could learn the jargon; he could impose on the totally ignorant—nay, upon others; for ask the name of any plant and he would give it. How should he not be a botanical authority? The same with other matters. I suppose that we all cry for what we have not got. Timothy had a large estate, and thought the possession quite a matter of course. Who feels grateful for having two legs? By a comfortable little family arrangement, which saved him nearly all the trouble of courtship, he had secured a charming girl, with money of her own and golden prospects, for his bride—a girl who made the hearts and pockets of all the youths who came near her yearn fondly; and he deemed the acquisition rather a bore than otherwise: it was Susan Stafford who had the best of the bargain, in his ungallant opinion.

How was the match made? Thus—

The Conybeare and Stafford Suffolk estates being adjacent, and the boundary line running in one part over a very pretty hill, the crest of which was particularly well suited for a building site, it so happened that the family mansions were hardly a stone's throw apart; and as there was no other county family habitation within four miles, it was necessary for the Conybeares and Staffords either to quarrel or be very intimate. They wisely preferred the latter. So the present young people had grown up together like members of one family; and when it was arranged by the heads that it would be a capital plan to cement the alliance by a marriage between the eldest Conybeare son and the only Stafford daughter, Susan acquiesced quite as a matter of course. Afterwards, when she went to London, and found out what things meant, she thought that perhaps she might have picked better for herself; but her word was passed, and she had no idea of breaking it and vexing her parents. It would have vexed them, too; for Conybeare the

father was now dead, and Timothy squired in his stead.

He did not apologize for his tardiness, neither did Susan resent it, but got up and danced as though she belonged to him—which, indeed, was her feeling. In five minutes Timothy had done his frivolous duty, and was free to indulge in more congenial conversation: Mr. Nicholas Foley was a welcome successor.

Indeed, Nick Foley was mostly welcomed by ladies, especially at balls, picnics, and garden parties. He was good-looking; he danced to perfection; above all, he had tact. A model ladies' man, he could even ingratiate himself with those monsters of hyper-civilization who would improve upon nature and abolish the distinctions of sex; so that a Woman's Rights Association had offered him the post of honorary secretary, and *he had backed out without offending them*. After that, judge whether he could make himself agreeable.

"What an amiable, unselfish fellow Conybeare is," said he, in the pause of a galop.

"Yes?" said Susan.

"Yes. If I were in his place, I fear that I should be far more greedy—more inclined to thrust myself forward. Bad taste, I own; but I should have terrible work to help it. It must be delightful never to feel jealous."

"Is that your character? Oh, Mr. Foley!"

"I sometimes think so."

"What a prospect for some one, some day!"

"No. All that sort of thing is over for me," said Nick, in a voice of profound melancholy. "But," he added, as if throwing off a weight of agony by a violent effort, "will you take another turn?"

TABLE TALK.

WE ARE GLAD TO SEE that an experiment upon the use of chalk as fuel—to which use we lately called the attention of our readers—is being made by the South-Western Railway Company. They first tried mixing chalk with coals for consumption in fire-grates at the offices, Waterloo, and, "finding it answer, have made arrangements for a regular supply to the various stations throughout the line, for use in the several offices and waiting-rooms, and have issued an order for a truck-load of chalk to be received at all the stations." The chalk is to be used as follows:—First

light the fire as usual with wood and coals, then put on a layer of chalk, following with another layer of coals. A fire so made lasts a long time, and throws out a good heat. In the waiting-room at Guildford it is said that chalk has been in use as fuel for some days, and is said to have been found to answer very well. We shall watch with great interest the success of this and similar experiments with chalk as a means of giving out the heat, while it saves a large part of the expense, of fires entirely made up of coals. This question of fires has of late come under the notice of Paterfamilias in the most unpleasant way possible—that of doubled bills from his coal merchant.

IT IS VERY NOTEWORTHY, that whilst Great Britain holds the place of honour amongst the debtors of the world, she has, according to a Berlin official organ, the smallest standing army of the "several powers that have hitherto ranked as of the first class." According to this Berlin paper, the strongest military power is Russia, which has most battalions. Next comes Germany, then come France, Austria, and Italy, in the order named; whilst England stands last. The writer concludes from this that several countries, "hitherto ranked as of the first class, will, in consequence of their military development not having kept pace with that of other great powers, be incapable of going to war in future unless they have allies. This is especially the case with Austria and England, and also with Italy." We hope the case with us is not quite so bad as our German critic makes it out to be. England is hardly yet a second-rate power, though our weak foreign policy has, it appears, satisfied many continental writers that we are no longer to be "ranked as of the first class."

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W.C.

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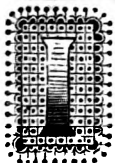
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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXIX.



GOT this address of yours from MacIntyre," said Arthur, calling on Philip at mid-day. "Why have you been hiding away so long?"

"There has been no hiding," said Philip, half sullenly.

Then both men paused, thinking of the words that were to be spoken between them.

Arthur was the first to speak.

"Of course you know what MacIntyre came to tell me."

"Of course I know it."

"Whatever happens, Philip, let us be friends still. If it is clear that my father married—was married—before he married my mother, there is nothing more to be said."

Both flushed scarlet.

"You see, Arthur, I have known since I was fifteen years old—no matter how—that I am your half-brother. This question is more to me than property. It is legitimacy."

"I know."

"But go by what your lawyer advises. Let us make a legal question of it all."

"My lawyer says fight."

"Then fight."

"Fighting means bringing the private life of our father into public, making known things that ought not to be revealed. I think I cannot fight, Phil."

"But I *must*, Arthur."

"Yes, and I *must* give way. After all, Phil, it matters very little to me, so far as the money goes. I shall have to work; but I am a man of very simple habits. You will make a better planter than I. You will go out and do great things for Palmiste."

"Not I. I fight for my legitimacy. I shall do no great things, either here or in Palmiste."

"Let me tell you about the property, Phil. No—it is best that you should know. It is a very good property. In ordinary years, when there is no hurricane, it is worth more than four thousand pounds a year. I do not spend one-fourth of that amount. There are consequently large accumulations. I should think I am worth thirty thousand pounds—that is, you are worth."

"It is not the value of the property—"

"I know. Still you ought to learn all that is at stake. This is yours. I surrender it all, rather than go to law over our father's grave."

"I must prove my legitimate birth, if I can, Arthur. Think of it. Think what it is to me, who have all along been weighted with my birth, to be made free—free and equal to all other men."

"I do think of it. I think a great deal of it. If I were in your place, nothing

should persuade me to forego the chance of setting this right. Still, I believe you have always exaggerated the importance of the point."

"It may be so. I do not think so."

"And now, Phil, let us talk it over completely. I am in your hands. The whole estate will be yours as soon as the transfer can be made. But you will not let me go quite empty-handed."

"Good heavens—no!" cried Philip. "I believe you are the most chivalrous man in the world. Empty-handed! No. Take what you will."

"Give me what you have yourself, and I shall be content."

"You mean what I had, I suppose. Make it double, Arthur, and I shall be content—content in a way. How is any man to be contented who has the slave blood in his veins? Look here." He pulled his short, curly black hair. "This comes from the negro wool. And look here." He held out his hand. "Do you see the blue below the nails? That comes from the negro blood. And look at my eyes. Do you see the black streak beneath them? Negro blood, I tell you. And generation after generation may pass, but these marks never die away. My face, at least, is like my father's. I am more like him than you are, Arthur."

"You are too sensitive, Phil. Do you really seriously think the old prejudices are founded in reason? Do you imagine that you are the least worse for having this little admixture of race in your blood?"

"I do," said his brother. "I know that I am worse. I feel it. When white men are calm, I am excited. When they are careless about their superiority, I am anxious to assert mine. When they are self-possessed, I am self-conscious. When they are at ease, I am vain. I know my faults. I can do things as well as any man, but I can do nothing so well as some men. That is the curse of the mulatto, the octoroon, or whatever you like to call him. Unstable as water, we never excel. So far, we are like Judah, the son of Jacob, founder, you know, of the celebrated tribe of that name."

They were silent for a while.

"Even now I have made myself a greater fool, a greater ass than you would conceive possible. If ever you hear stories about me, Arthur—by Jove, you are sure to hear them!"—he suddenly remembered Venn, and his

friendship with Arthur—"think that I am more than sorry; not repentant, because I do not see any good in repentance. Milk that is spilt, eggs that are broken, money that is spent, sins that are committed, are so many facts accomplished. Well, never mind. Let us return to business. You will take the accumulated funds."

"No; I will take ten thousand pounds, and I shall be rich."

"Have what you like. And now take me to your lawyer's, and let us tell him what we are going to do. And if at any moment, Arthur, either now or hereafter, you wish to rescind your transfer, you shall do it, and we will fight. By gad, the prodigal son always gets the best of it! The good young man toils and moils, and gets nothing. Then, you see, the scapegrace comes home. Quick, the fatted calf—kill, cook, light the fire, make the stuffing, roast the veal, broach the cask, and spread the feast."

So he passed, in his light way, from repentance to cynicism, happy at heart in one thing—that now he could face his creditors and meet his engagements.

It was a week after this that MacIntyre, who had been calling every day at the Bursleigh Club, and at Notting-hill, being a prey to the most gnawing anxieties he had ever known—at last found Philip at home.

He was greeted with a shout of laughter—not, it is true, of that kind which we are accustomed to associate with the mirth of innocence. Perhaps Philip's joyousness had something in it of the Sardinian character.

"Come, Prince of Evil Devices, and receive your due."

"You are pleased to be facetious," observed MacIntyre.

"Haven't I a right to be facetious? Do not I owe it to you that I have got rid of a wife, and come into a fortune? Sit down, man, and let us have a reckoning. My engagements are met. It is all settled. Arthur retires, and the heir-at-law steps in. Rid of a wife—with dishonour saved, and honour gained—what do I owe you? Five thousand is too paltry a sum to speak of."

MacIntyre turned perfectly white, and shivered from head to foot.

"The papers are signed—the transfer is completed. I am in possession of the estate of Fontainebleau and fifteen thousand pounds in Stocks. It is your doing,

MacIntyre. You shall have the money bargained for. Give me up the agreement."

He took it from his pocket, and handed it over, with trembling hands. He was unable to speak, for very astonishment. He grew faint, and staggered against the table.

Phil caught him by the arm.

"Why, what is the matter, man? Will you have some brandy?"

"Not now, Phil—not now. Let me sit down a moment, and recover myself."

Presently he started up again.

"Now," he cried, "at once; let me have no delay. The money, Phil—the money! Let me handle it. Ah! At last—at last! I have been anxious, Phil. I was afraid there was some link missing—some possible doubt; but it is all right—it is all right. I have won the prize I worked for."

"You have won the compensation you were talking about the other night."

"Yes," said the philosopher—"the compensation—ah, yes, the compensation! It has come."

"And without any of the little hankey-pankey that the world has agreed to condemn—isn't that so?"

"Surely—surely."

He looked at Philip with steady eyes, but shaky lips.

"A righteous man, you know, never begs his bread."

"I've begged mine, like the unrighteous, —or next door to it. The next door to it, may be, was not included in the text."

"Obviously, the inference is that you are a righteous man. But, come—one word of explanation first. You know when I met you in the street?"

"As if I shall ever forget the time."

"You had those papers in your pocket then?"

"They have never left me since I took them away from Palmiste."

"Why did you not produce them at once?"

"Because the risk was too great. I wanted to see how you would take the chance. It was one I could not afford to risk. When I saw you going downhill, I knew that I had only to wait for the end. Everything helped me. You became more and more involved. I became more and more certain; but it was not till the very end that I dared bring them out."

"And then you thought you could win?"

"I did. I knew that under the cloud of misfortunes any of the old misplaced generosity to your milksop of a brother would be finally put away and done with, and that the lure—legitimacy and a fortune—would be too much for you to withstand. I rejoiced, Philip—I rejoiced."

Philip was silent. By all the rules, he should have kicked this man then and there. But he was accustomed to the calculating and unscrupulous ways of the creature. Besides, he half liked him. The very openness of his wickedness was a kind of charm. It was only one more confession—a confession already more than half made.

"You have won, then. Let that be your consolation. And now tell me, MacIntyre. Swear by all that you hold sacred— Stay, is there anything you hold sacred?"

"Money—I will swear by money. Or drink—I will swear by drink."

"Swear, then, anyhow, that you will tell me the truth. Did my father write those letters?"

"He did, Philip—I swear it. He did, indeed."

Only the smallest suppressio veri—only the dates that were added long afterwards by himself.

"And the marriage. Is that register really in the church book?"

"I swear it is there. Did you not see the attestation of the Palmiste lawyers? It is really there."

So it was.

He might have added, to complete the truth of the attestation, that he had himself placed it there.

"Then I am the lawful heir. I have not defrauded Arthur."

"You have not. What does Arthur get out of it?"

"Ten thousand."

"And vera handsome, too. Double of my share. Arthur has done well. Now give me my money, Phil."

Philip gave him a bank pass-book.

"I have paid into your account at this bank, the sum of five thousand pounds—you can see the note of the amount. Here is your cheque-book. Go, now, man, and be happy in your own way."

"Yes, I will go. You are a rich man. I am as rich as I wish to be. My old maxims will no longer be of any use either to you or

to me. It pains me only to think that I must, with my experience, dissemble my convictions and go over to the other side, preaching in future that honesty is the best policy. I may vera likely give lectures to show how merit is rewarded and steady effort always commands success. Steady effort has been, as you know, of great use to me. Industry is the best thing going. We always get what we deserve. Everything is for the best. Whatever is right. The prosperous man goes back to the copy-books for his philosophy, and all his reading is thrown away. Now, my experience is the contrary. It is only the clumsy sinners who get punished. The innocent man very often gets the flogging. Therein the moral world differs from the natural. For if you run your head against a post, you infallibly get a headache. He who would be rich must also be cautious. If he can escape detection, he will acquire money, and therefore happiness. My dear pupil, a word of parting advice."

"No," replied Philip. "Go. I hardly know whether to thank you or to curse you. I think I must curse you. You have poisoned the atmosphere of life for me. I have got riches without pleasure. I can never be happy again, with the memory of the past—your doing."

"Poor little leddy," sighed MacIntyre. "I'm vera sorry—I'm vera sorry indeed, for her hard fate. I wish it had never been done—eh, Phil? It was an awfu' piece of wickedness—"

"It was. God forgive us both! But it can never be forgiven."

"I'm vera sorry, Phil. It was a clumsy thing. But there—we won't talk about it. What was it I was telling you some time ago, Phil? The poor man never repents—it is only the rich. See, now—I am rich, and I begin to repent at once. Eh, man, it is a terrible time I have before me! There's just an awfu' heap to repent for. And pocket handkerchiefs, too, vera expensive. As soon as I get settled, I shall begin. But where? Phil, I think I shall work backwards. It will come easier so. Obsairve. He who tackles his worst foe at once has little to fear from the rest. The drink, and the troubles at Sydney—all these things are venial. But the lassie, Phil, the lassie—I must begin my repentance with the lassie."

"You will never begin your repentance at

all. You will go on getting drunk till you die."

"Philip Durnford," returned Mr. MacIntyre, magisterially, "you pain me. After an acquaintance of nearly twenty years—after all the maxims I have taught you, and the corpus of oreiginal and borrowed philosophy that I have compiled and digested for you—to think that you could say a thing like that. Know, sir, once for all, that the man at ease with fortune never drinks, save in moderation. The philosopher gets drunk when his cares become too much for him. He changes his world when the present is intolerable. Some poor creatures commit suicide. The true philosopher drinks. He alone is unhappy who has not the means of getting drunk. When I was between the boards, I am not ashamed to confess, I used to save twopence a day. That made a shilling a week. With that I was able to get drunk on Sunday, by taking twopennyworths of gin and porter in alternate swigs. But that is all over. Philip, my pupil, I shall go away. I shall go back to Scotland, among my own people, as an elder of the kirk, which I intend to be. I shall set an example of rigid doctrine, Sabbatarian strictness, and stern morality. After a', it is good for the vulgus—the common herd—to be kept to strict rules. But drink—no, sir. Intoxication and Alexander MacIntyre have parted company. I'm far from saying that I shall not take my glass 'tween whiles—the twal' hoor especially. That is but natural. But intemperance! Sir, the thought degrades me."

He buttoned up his coat, and put on his hat.

"Farewell, Philip; you will never see me again. And as for that poor young thing—"

"Do not provoke me too much," said Philip, growing pale.

"I was only going to say, that if you can take her back, it is your duty. I'm vera sorry. She was bonnie, she was kind, she was douce, she was faithful. Ah! Phil, Phil!—it is a terrible thing to think of, the wickedness of the world! I must go away at once, and begin my repentance."

He shook his head from side to side, seized Philip by the hand, and disappeared.

And this was the last that Philip Durnford ever saw of his old tutor.

CHAPTER XXX.

LEAVING the house, poor little Lollie walked quickly away into the dark November mist, and down the road. She had no purpose; for as yet she had but one thought—to get away; to see the last of a house which had witnessed her shame and suffering; to take herself somewhere—it mattered not where—till the dull, dead pain in her brow would go away, and she should feel herself again able to see things clearly—able to go to Mr. Venn and tell him all. As she went along the streets and passed the lighted shops, it seemed that every woman shunned her, or looked at her in contempt, and every man stared. In all the passers-by she detected the glance of scorn. The very beggars did not ask her for alms; the crossing-sweepers allowed her to pass unnoticed.

It was only two o'clock, and she had more than two hours of daylight before her. She pulled down her veil and walked on, her fingers interlaced, like a suppliant's, feeling for the lost wedding ring. She passed down the long Edgware-road, which seemed to have no end, and where the noise of the cabs nearly drove her mad. At last she came to the Park, where the comparative quiet soothed her nerves. But she walked on, and presently found herself in Piccadilly. She hurried across the road here, and got into the Green Park, which was even quieter and more deserted than the other. And so at last into St. James's, the best of the three, beyond which arose the intolerable noise and tumult of the streets. She sat down on one of the benches. It was the very same bench where she had once sat with Philip, talking over the meaning of love and marriage. Alas! she knew by this time what one might mean, but not the other. For as she sat alone, and the early evening closed round her, she felt how, through all, her marriage was but a mockery of everything—of love, because she never loved him; of a real ceremony, because the man was no clergyman; how there was no religion in what she had done, no duty, no prudence—nothing but a vain and ignorant desire to please her guardian. And, after all, he had turned her off.

But as yet she could think of nothing clearly.

Two hours since she left him—only two hours!—and it seemed an age, and the last

three months a dream of long ago. And as she tried to think, the stream of her thoughts would rush backwards in her head, as if stopped and turned by some sudden dam.

Big Ben struck four. Presently there came to her a policeman, with hirsute countenance and kindly eyes.

"The Park gates shut at half-past four, miss. Don't you think you had better not sit any longer under this dripping tree?"

She got up at once—submissive. Poor little Lollie, always obedient, always *douce*.

"I will go, if you like."

"Hadn't you better go home, miss?"

She made no answer, but looked at him sadly for a moment, and then, drawing her veil tighter over her face, went slowly through the gates and passed through the Horse Guards. In the Strand, the shops were all lit up, and things looked brighter. She went down the street slowly, looking into every window as she passed, trying to think what it was she wanted to buy. Here were chains, gold watches, and silver cups; and here—what is it makes her heart leap up within her, and her pale cheek glow?—a tray of wedding rings. She hurried in, she held out her finger to be measured without saying a word, and pointed to the tray. The ring cost her a guinea, and so she had nineteen shillings left. But she came out relieved of a little of the pain that oppressed her, and went on happier, as if something had been restored to her.

It was nearly six when she came to Chancery-lane; and as she saw the old familiar, ugly street once more, a great yearning came over her heart; for was it not the street that leads to Gray's Inn?

"I will arise and go unto my father," said the poor prodigal—say all of us, when sorrow and punishment fall upon us. "I will go to Mr. Venn," thought Lollie.

She quickened her step, and came to the familiar portals. No one saw her go in. She mounted the stairs—ah, how often had she run up before!—thinking what she should say. Alas! when she got there, the outer door was shut, and Mr. Venn was not at home.

Then her heart fell; and she burst into low wailings and tears, leaning her cheek against the door, as if that could sympathize with her trouble. It was the hour when every man in Gray's Inn was gone out to dinner, and no one was on the staircase to hear her.

She might have known, had she reflected. But she could not think. Time had no more any meaning for her. She thought that Mr. Venn was gone away altogether, and that she had no longer a single friend left in the whole world. So, when the paroxysm of tears, the first she had shed, had passed, she crept downstairs again, and turned away to go out at the north gate, by Raymond's-buildings. Alas, alas! had she taken the other turning she would have met Venn himself, almost as sad as she was, returning home to his desolate chambers.

Seven o'clock—eight—nine. The shops are getting shut now, and the streets not so crowded. There are not so many carts about, which is good for her nerves. But the rain is pouring upon her. She is somewhere about Regent's Park—walking, walking still. The rain falls heavily. Her dress is wet through, and clings to her limbs; but she staggers on, mechanically.

Hartley Venn is in his chambers, sitting over the fire, brooding.

Philip is drinking, and playing cards.

Men pass by and speak to her. She does not hear, and takes no notice.

Twelve o'clock—one o'clock. The passengers in the street are very few now.

A rush of many people and of galloping horses. There is a fire, and the cavalcade of rescue runs headlong down the street, followed by a little mob of boys and men. They are always awake, these boys and men, ready for plunder.

Then silence again.

Two o'clock. The street is quite empty now. Then from a side street there are loud screams and cries, and a woman rushes into the road with a wild shriek. She passes close to Lollie. Her face is bleeding, her clothes are torn. She waves her arms like some wild Cassandra, as one who prophesies the woe that shall fall upon the city. But it is nothing. Only the wail of despair and misery; for she is starving, and her husband in a drunken rage has struck her down and trampled on her. Oh! brothers and sisters, how we suffer, how we suffer for our sins!

Three o'clock. She is in Oxford-street, the stony-hearted. It is quite empty. Not even a policeman in sight. Her eyes are heavy and dim; her head is burning; an unnatural strength possesses her limbs; her shoulders have fallen forward. Is this Hartley Venn's little girl? This, with the

bowed head, the draggled dress, the weary gait? Oh! Hartley, could you have seen her then, it would have been bad for Philip and his tutor! But Hartley is sound asleep, and so is Philip; so, too, is Mr. MacIntyre. They are all asleep and comfortable in their beds, and only the tender and delicate girl is wandering about in the night under the rain.

The city is sleeping. A strange hush has fallen over London. Not the sound of a single wheel, not a footstep. The silence strikes her; for it seems to have come suddenly. She lifts her head, and looks round, with a moan of weariness and agony.

After her there creeps silently, on bare feet, a creature in the semblance of a man.

He is tall, nearly six feet high, lean and emaciated. His scanty clothes are rags; his trousers are so tight that the sharp bones seem projecting through them. His arms are too long for the ragged sleeves of his tattered coat. He has no hat. His face is black with dirt, and wisps of a fortnight's beard are sticking in patches over it. His hair is long and matted. His eyes are sharp. It is the wolf of London—the wehr-wolf of civilization. In what lair does he crouch all day? Where does he hide while honest folk are up and doing?

She does not hear him as his naked feet press close upon her. As he gets nearer he looks round, quickly and furtively, like a beast of prey, before he makes his spring. No policeman is in sight. His long fingers clutch her shoulder, and she feels his quick breath upon her cheek. She starts, and turns with a shriek of terror.

"Have you got any money?" he hisses. "Give it to me—give it to me quick, or I will murder you."

She stared for a moment, and then, understanding so much, put her hand in her pocket, and drew out her purse. He looked up and down the street, and then snatching it from her hand, swiftly fled down a court and was lost.

Then the great, bare street fills her with terror, and she turns out of it. Perhaps there are no wolves in the small streets.

So, presently, she finds herself in Covent-garden Market. Light, activity, noise. The early market carts are arriving. She goes under the piazza, and, sitting on a basket, falls fast asleep in the midst of it all.

She sleeps for nearly two hours. Then

she is awakened by a rough but not unkindly touch of her arm.

"Come, young woman, I want my basket."

She sprang to her feet, trying to remember where she was. Two or three people were staring at her. A great, red-faced woman among the rest—a coarse, rough, rude, hard-drinking creature.

They were speaking to her, but she could not understand. It seemed a dream.

"Leave her to me," said the woman. "You go about your business, all of you. I know a lady when I see her. You leave her, all of you, to me. Come, my dear, don't try to say a word. Don't 'ee speak now, or else ye'll begin to cry. Wait a bit—wait a bit."

She put her arms round Lollie's waist, and half led, half carried her to a coffee-stall, of which, indeed, she was the proprietor.

"Now, me darlin', sit ye down on my seat, and taste this."

Laura had eaten nothing since breakfast the preceding day, say eighteen hours. The coffee restored her to a sense of reality, for she had fallen into a state almost of coma. She drank the cup, and handed it back to her new friend.

"Now, my dear, another—and a bit of bread and butter. Don't 'ee say a word, now, or ye'll begin to cry."

She took a little bread and butter, and then, overcome with weariness, her head fell upon the tray where the bread and butter stood, and she was asleep again.

The good soul covered her with a shawl—not the cleanest in the world, but the only one she had—and went on with her early coffee trade. At seven, she awakened her.

"I must go now, my dear," she said. "I'm an hour almost behind my time, and the childer want me; but I wouldn't waken you. Are you better now?"

Lollie felt in her pocket for her purse.

"I remember," she said, "a man robbed me last night of all I had. It was nineteen shillings. Stay," she added, taking off her locket—Venn's present—"take this for your kindness."

"I won't," said the woman, stoutly.

"You must. Please take it. I think I should have died if it hadn't been for you. You are a good woman."

"Don't 'ee, now, miss," she answered, taking the locket—"don't 'ee, now, miss, or you'll cry."

And then she began to cry herself; and Lollie left her, and slipped away.

On the Embankment, while the day slowly breaks, and as the light returns, the poor child begins to realize the desolateness of her position. She leans upon the low wall, and tries to think what she shall do. Only one thing occurs to her. She must go back to Gray's Inn, and find out where Venn is. She has no money to buy breakfast—she has nowhere even to sit down, and her limbs are trembling with fatigue. She was almost staggering now as she reached the gate of the Inn. From the other side of the road, she saw the porter and the people who knew her face standing in the gateway. So she went round by the side entrance in Warwick-court to the door. This time, at least, she would find him in his chambers. Alas! no. The door was still shut, as the gate of Paradise was to the Peri; and her courage died away within her. Inside lay Hartley, sound asleep; for it was but nine o'clock. Then she slowly and sadly descended the staircase. Should she go and ask the porter where he was? Not yet—presently. She would wait a little, and make one more trial. And so, down Holborn and into Long-acre, with a dazed idea of finding her way to Covent-garden, where there might be another basket to sit upon.

But as she crawled along, her cheeks blanched, her eyes heavy and dull, neither seeing nor feeling anything, some one passed her, started, ran back, and caught her by the arm, crying—

"Miss Lollie, Miss Lollie!" And she fell fainting forwards.

It was no other than that Mary of whom mention has already been made. Mary the sinful, you know. She was on her way to rehearsal at Drury-lane. For there was the grandest of all grand spectacles "on," and she was one of the most prominent of the ladies engaged specially—a dignified position nearest to the lights—in the joyous dance of village maidens. She also had to appear as one of the Queen's personal attendants, in a procession which beat into fits any procession ever made on the stage or off it. She was going along with a friend, also engaged in the same line, talking of her boy—

"And the notice he takes—it's wonderful. Only two years old, and he understands everything you tell him. And the words he

can say; and good as gold with it all. I'm making him a little pair of—Oh, good gracious, it's Lollie Collingwood!"

She lived close by, in the pleasant seclusion of a two-pair back, King-street, Long-acre.

The two lifted Laura between them, and half carried her, half led her to the door, and dragged her upstairs, because now she gave way altogether, and lay lifeless in their arms. They placed her on the bed, and waited to see if she would recover. Presently she opened her eyes, gave a dreamy look at them as they leaned over the bed, and closed them again.

"Who is it?" whispered the friend.

"Hush! Don't make any noise. It's Mr. Venn's little girl. Oh, dear! oh, dear! and she so pretty and good! See—she's got a wedding ring on. Go down and get the kettle, my dear; and go on to rehearsal without me. I shall be fined; but I know who will pay the fine. And bring Georgie up. Perhaps the sight of him will do her good—it always does me; and come back, my dear, when rehearsal's over—I shall want you."

She took off Lollie's hat and jacket, her boots, and wet stockings, covering her poor cold feet with blankets; and then smoothed and tidied her hair, hanging dank and wet upon her cheek as if she had been drowned.

But Lollie made no movement, lying stupefied and senseless.

Presently came up the other woman, bearing tea in one hand, and little Georgie, making a tremendous crowing, in the other.

"Is she come to?" whispered the girl.

"No; but she will presently. Go you, or you'll be late, too; and don't forget to come back as soon as you can. Where's the sugar? Georgie, boy, you've got to be very quiet. Sit down, and play with the spoon, and mother will give you sugared bread and butter."

The child immediately sat down, and assumed the silence of a deer-stalker.

"Did you ever see such a boy?" his mother went on. "As good as gold. Now the milk; and ask Mrs. Smith to trust me another quarter-hundred of coals. I must have a fire for this poor thing. Tell her there's them as will see it paid."

She made up the fire, tidied the room, so that it looked at least clean and neat; and then, pouring out the tea, brought it to the bedside.

"Lollie, my dear," she whispered—"Lollie, my little darling, open your eyes. It's only me—it's only Mary, that you helped three years ago. Take some tea, dear; and lie down, and go to sleep, and I'll send for Mr. Venn."

At this name the girl opened her eyes, and half lifted her head, while she drank the tea. Then she lay back, looked round the room, pressed her hand to her head as if in pain, and shut her eyes again.

She lay like one dead, but for the light breathing to which her good Samaritan listened from time to time.

At two o'clock the friend came back, and Mary began to hunt about in drawers, in pockets, everywhere.

"I knew I'd got a piece left somewhere," she said at last, triumphantly producing a piece of note-paper the size of a man's hand, the remnant of a quire, the only purchase of note-paper she ever had occasion to make. "I knew I'd got a piece left. But there's no ink. A pencil must do."

With some pains, for she was not one of those who write a letter every day, she indited a letter to Mr. Venn:—

"DEAR MR. VENN—Come here as soon as you can. If you are out, come when you get back. Never mind what time it is. If it's midnight, you must come.

"MARY."

"Take that," she whispered, "to Gray's Inn. If he is out, drop it into his letter-box; if he is in, tell him not to go bringing the old grandmother round. Laura don't want to see her, I fancy, so much as him."

On the bed the patient lay sleeping through all that day; for Mr. Venn did not come. A sudden shock makes one stupid. So long as it cannot be understood, one can go to sleep over it. It is only when the dull, slow pain succeeds the stupefying blow that we begin really to suffer. Lollie's sleep was what Mr. MacIntyre might have called a compensation due to her. And in her dreams she went back to her husband, and mixed up, with the little house at Notting-hill, her former happiness with Mr. Venn.

The hours sped on, and the afternoon came on. Mary had her dinner, and put something on the hob for Lollie if she should wake. Then came tea-time; but she slept still, and the boy had to be put to bed. Then it was Mary discovered that Lollie

was sleeping in clothes wet through and through.

She half raised her, pulled them off, and laid her back, with her own warm flannel dressing gown wrapped round her.

No Mr. Venn.

Then Mary sat down by the fire, prepared to watch and keep herself awake.

A CASE AGAINST ALMA MATER.

II.

THE system of credit which prevails at the two great English Universities, and to which I casually alluded in my last paper, is a fearful and wonderful institution—a thing unique; a monstrosity which the “intelligent foreigner” should be told to study, in order that he may go home more perplexed than ever by our insular peculiarities. If these statements sound like exaggerations, I can only say that if the candid reader will but patiently follow me through this article, he will find that I am able to make good every one of them, and bring a formidable array of facts to prove my case against Alma Mater.

The origin of this stupendous institution is, so far as I have been able to discover, shrouded in the mists of myth. No one—not even the most erudite of antiquarians—is able to state precisely when or how it arose. Some have considered it a privilege granted to University tradesmen by Thomas à Beckett. Others trace its origin to the roystering reaction which followed upon the fall of the Puritans. But however this may be, it is at any rate of sufficient antiquity to assume that venerable—and I might almost say religious—garb, which entitles it to rank with the most time-honoured of University institutions.

There is no better or more pithy commentary upon Solomon’s adage, “There is nothing new under the sun,” than that afforded by a study of the old statute-books. The student who will take the trouble to search carefully among those mouldy archives will find that grievances and abuses which we deem of purely modern growth not only existed among our fathers, but were carefully provided against by them. Now, in the case before us, it is evident that at some remote period there was a question raised as to the advisability of encouraging a system of unlimited credit at the University, and that it was

answered emphatically in the negative. For in the University statute-book there is an enactment to this effect:—“That every tradesman who shall neglect to send in to the college tutor the bill of any undergraduate who has dealings with him, so soon as the said bill shall exceed the sum of five pounds, shall be liable to be ‘dis-communed.’” As “discommuning” means deprivation of all custom from members of the University, it is plain that the penalty was intended to be a serious one; and it may therefore be inferred that the offence itself was also considered serious. There never was a more sensible act passed; and yet it is now, to all intents and purposes, a dead letter. Its provisions are flagrantly and audaciously violated by every tradesman in the place; while the authorities wink at these violations, and make no attempt to enforce the penalties which the act provides. Still, whatever the University authorities may say or think to the contrary, the existence of such a statute on the books is a proof that the system of credit is contrary to the true spirit and intention of University institutions—that it is illegal, according to the code of laws which the University itself has established for its own governance; and that the open toleration—not to say encouragement—which it meets with is a gross and ridiculous anomaly which plainly stultifies University legislation.

But let me endeavour to give the uninitiated in the mysteries of Alma Mater some idea of the nature and extent of this system of credit.

It is the fashion to call the undergraduate emphatically a “man;” and no deadlier insult could be offered, even to the most verdant freshman, than to bestow upon him the opprobrious epithet of “youth,” or even of “young man.” He is at once, by the etiquette of the place, installed in the full dignity of manhood. Believing himself, then, to be a man—in defiance of the significant denial to that assertion which his own smooth, boyish face daily gives him from his looking-glass—he feels that he ought to live like a man, and at once openly cultivate those tastes and pleasures which are to the schoolboy’s eyes the essence of manliness. He is confirmed in the idea of his new dignity and importance by the shower of circulars, deferentially soliciting his patronage, which descends upon him before

his freshmanhip is a day old. His soul burns to patronize somebody, and enter at once upon the lofty duties of manhood. He rushes out first to the tobacconist's, and orders all the apparatus of a smoker on an elaborate scale. The obsequious deference with which his orders are at once attended to, the eagerness displayed to secure him as a customer, still further swell his self-importance. With a lordly air, he orders the goods to be put down to his account; and then struts to the nearest wine merchant's, whom, in like condescending fashion, he favours with an extensive order for ale, wine, and spirits. In this case, too, he has merely to give his name and college, and the order is at once booked, and the goods sent in, without hesitation or inquiry. He goes the round of the tradesmen, ordering just what he pleases, without any restriction; and is everywhere treated as if he were a young millionaire with his fortune entirely at his own disposal.

There are, of course, shrewd and sensible young fellows who are proof against the temptations held out to them by this system of unlimited credit, but they are few; and after all, is it reasonable to expect that, as human nature is at present constituted, a boy of eighteen, with everybody pampering and toadying him, and telling him that he is a man, and should act for himself—is it reasonable, I say, to expect that a lad thus situated will display a Spartan firmness under temptation, and virtuously resist all the overtures of the siren Credit?

Now, it is bad enough that any foolish young fellow should be at liberty to go about ordering recklessly, here and there and everywhere, just what he pleases, without any restraint whatever upon his extravagance, and without any thought on the part either of tutor or tradesman of inquiring whether his father's means justify such expenditure. All this is bad enough, in all conscience; but "worse remains behind."

The tradesman, who knows every artful trick for entrapping ingenuous youth, is not content with welcoming the undergraduate to his shop, and offering him unlimited credit; he goes out to seek his victim, and drive him into the snare. None knows better than he the power of importunity, especially with such pliable natures as he has to deal with. If the mountain won't come to Mohammed, Mohammed must go to the mountain. If the customer is shy, and

has not made a purchase for two or three days, he is at once looked up. Remember, the tradesman has only some three years in which to make money out of his victim; every day is therefore precious to him, and he must not let the grass grow under his feet, or neglect to make his hay while the sun shines. And so the customer is called upon. Of course, the most attractive samples are displayed, and the unctuous flattery of the vendor soon cozens an order out of even the most reluctant purchaser. Outsiders have no conception of the extent to which University tradesmen "tout" their wares, and how artfully they contrive to obtain orders by means of that obsequious toadyism which becomes an art in their hands—an art of which there are no such finished and perfect professors in the world. Let me take the tailor, for example. You have already ordered more clothes than you can ever possibly wear, and therefore you have not given him an order for, we will say, a week. It is lunch time, and you are enjoying a cold collation—the undergraduate does everything on a princely and sumptuous scale—alone, or in the company of a friend or two. There comes a knock at the door; and then, enter a well-dressed, easy-mannered man, who overwhelms you with polite inquiries, who seems intuitively to divine your mood at once—is jocular if you are jocular, grave if you are grave—and has a happy way of conveying to you by his manner the impression that he considers you a young lord of creation, and himself a humble suppliant for your patronage. You don't want anything of him to-day, and you tell him so—laughingly, if you are in a good humour; crustily, if you are the reverse. But his bland persistence is far more than a match for your feeble resistance. His parcel of patterns is unpacked before you have stammered out half a dozen words of remonstrance. He admits all your objections with a smile of complacency: far be it from him to force you or press you to order what you don't want. He would rather not take an order at present, indeed, having so much business on hand. But a vacancy will probably soon occur in your wardrobe, which will require filling. In view of that contingency, perhaps you will like to select something from "our new spring patterns—the latest fashion." Well, it ends with your ordering something of the fellow, if it is only just to get rid of him; and for the

moment it is convenient to you to forget that your allowance is £200 a year, and that you are spending more in one term upon your tailor than your worthy and respected father allows himself to spend in a couple of years. If you were a young person of proper moral courage, even of sound, mature common sense, you would soon make that tailor go about his business—kick him downstairs, if necessary. But you are not such an exemplary young person; you are a good-natured, easy-going, thoughtless English lad, deluded into the belief that you are a man, fancying yourself the possessor of Fortunatus's purse, and finding it very pleasant to be treated as if you were a person of some consequence in the world.

This sort of "touting" is one of the special features of the University, and, so far as I know, is unique; there being nothing to compare with it anywhere else. It is customary for the larger tailors and fancy tradesmen to retain the services of a professional "tout," who is, of course, a toady of the first water, always well-dressed and intensely respectable in appearance, with the glib tongue of a Cheap Jack—a prince of gossips, with all the scandal of the place at his fingers' ends—a man of consummate tact, with the art of adapting his conversation to the different tastes of each customer, having always something to say which will interest and serve as a gentle prelude to the inevitable solicitation for an order which is sure to follow, but which is made to appear quite as an afterthought, and not as the primary object of his visit. With all this, he is generally a mean, cringing creature at the bottom. Despised, insulted to his face, occasionally knocked down, when his patrons are in their cups, he does not mind any humiliation—his object is to get a glass of sherry and an order from every customer on whom he calls; and he generally succeeds. His society is often tolerated for an hour or two at a time by those who relish racy anecdote and spicy scandal, and who do not despise these intellectual pleasures, even when supplied by such a contemptible jackal as this. I have seen such a "tout" sipping his wine and chatting on quite familiar terms with a group of undergraduates, in the rooms of one of the number; and, what is more, I have seen such a "tout," after a round of such visits, lying helplessly drunk on the sofa at three o'clock in the afternoon, in the rooms of a

customer who had been too liberal with his sherry. Oh, for the pen of Charles Reade, to describe in terms of fitting emphasis that loathsome reptile the professional "tout," the peculiar product of those noble and venerable institutions in which the youth of England are trained in all sound knowledge and religious education!

This is the system pursued by the larger and more respectable tradesmen, who pursue it under the ægis of tutorial protection; for those tradesmen who deal in necessities, such as tailors, haberdashers, chandlers, &c., are allowed to keep what are called "tutors' books." In these books is entered the sum total of each undergraduate's account with each of these tradesmen for the term, with the undergraduate's signature attached as a guarantee that the amount is correct. No list of items appears in this book, which, when duly signed by the undergraduates, is sent in to the tutor for whose pupils it is specially reserved; and the tutor merely transfers the amount signed for from this book to his own bill, which he sends in at the close of each term to the pupil's father. When he has induced the undergraduate to sign this book, which the thoughtless youth—I beg pardon, "man"—as often as not, does without glancing at the amount or asking for any list of the items, the tradesman feels that his money is secure. His account then becomes part and parcel of the tutor's college bill, for the payment of which the tutor is responsible. No undergraduate is allowed to come back into residence while his tutor's bill remains unpaid; and as all the items of that bill are supposed to have received the tutor's sanction, and to have passed through his supervision, Paterfamilias has no alternative but to pay, or summarily cut short his son's University career. Believing implicitly in the tutor, he fancies that all these expenses must be only what are just and proper and necessary; and, with a sigh, he writes out a cheque, not without misgivings that a University degree is an honour rather dearly purchased.

All the moneys due to tradesmen who are allowed the privilege of keeping a "tutor's book" are paid, as part of the tutor's college bill, into his private banking account, where he allows them to lie for a year before he disburses them to the several creditors. In the case of a tutor in a large college, the moneys which thus pass through his hands

amount to many thousands of pounds. The interest on such a sum for a year must be something very considerable. What becomes of it? It certainly does not go to the tradesman; and the natural inference is that the tutor levies a toll upon these moneys as they pass through his hands, and pockets the interest which accrues during the year they are lying in the bank. It may be that every tutor does not take advantage of this very obvious mode of adding to his income; but it is the firm belief of the tradesmen that the tutors regard this as their perquisite—the fair price which they have a right to charge for granting the tradesman the privilege and security of a tutor's book; and I have heard many of the most respectable tradesmen at my own University complain of it as an extortionate, arbitrary tax. Nevertheless, it is worth their while to pay the tax; for, supplying goods as they are to a minor without the consent or sanction of the parent, they could hardly feel safe unless covered by the broad shield of the tutor's sanction, implied if not expressed by his admitting the account into his bill. When this is done, the tradesman feels that the tutor and himself are in the same boat; and as there is no fear of the tutor's bill being left unpaid, he can survey the prospect with serene composure.

Now, what is this but direct encouragement by the tutors of the system of credit, which is the crying abuse of the Universities? I have shown how readily the tradesman avails himself of the tutor's book, because it is clearly to his interest to do so. Is it not also to the tutor's interest that the undergraduate should run up large accounts, and that those accounts should be sent in through the tutor? So long as the tutors continue the system of keeping the tradesmen out of their money for a whole year, and allow a mystery to hang over the disposal of the interest which accrues during that period, they cannot be surprised if they find themselves—unjustly it may be, but not unnaturally—accused of indirectly fostering and encouraging the system of credit for their own benefit.

There is another bad result of this system of tutors' books which I must glance at for a moment. It often happens that the undergraduate is himself appalled at the amount of his account, as visions of the paternal dismay and wrath crowd upon his mind. In this case the crafty tradesman is always ready to sympathize with him, and

help him out of his difficulty. It is pointed out to him that the amount is as yet only *in pencil*. If he would rather not let the whole amount go in, perhaps he would prefer signing for a part only; and that part alone will go in to the tutor. In this way both Paterfamilias and the tutor are hoodwinked; for each naturally thinks that the amount sent in is the *whole* amount due, and not a fraction only, as it really is. The most respectable tradesman sees nothing dishonest in being a party to this piece of deliberate deceit; and poor Paterfamilias remains in blissful ignorance of the conspiracy till the terrible settling-day arrives, when the degree closes the chapter of "Varsity life," and one party to the conspiracy, at least, has no further object to gain in keeping the transaction dark.

To how many undergraduates, I wonder, is the degree—that climax of their University career—really an honour and a pride? It is a welcome release from the immediate importunities of duns to most of them, and in that way it is no doubt a "consummation devoutly to be wished;" but its ominous shadow darkens the last year of the majority of undergraduates, I think. Town and college have made all they possibly can out of their victim, and they care no longer to keep up the disguise of respect and deference. Tutors grow cool, tradesmen grow impertinent, the only vestiges of the old toadyism that remain are those which still linger among the humbler college servants—the porter, who is expectant of his tip for luggage carrying; and the bedmaker, whose grim visage softens as she thinks of the sovereign in store for her—her traditional fee for robing her "young gentleman" for his last appearance in the Senate House.

Hitherto, I have only spoken of the very respectable tradesmen. What shall I say of those who are not respectable, over whom the ægis of tutorial patronage and protection is not spread? "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" The University swarms with these lesser harpies. They are for the most part in the fancy trade; and to all the wiles of their betters they add the still more subtle seductions of feminine charms—a pretty daughter or a handsome wife being usually part of their stock-in-trade. Of course, the morals of these decoy ducks are unimpeachable; but immaculate as they are, they are dangerous sirens in more ways than that of

coaxing young simpletons out of their money, and I shall have a further word to say about them and about female society in the University generally in another paper. Suffice it to say here that they are responsible for many of those terrible bills, so studiously kept secret hitherto, which fall like a live shell into the home circle, when father and mother, all unsuspecting, are welcoming the new-fledged "bachelor," "with all his blushing honours thick upon him."

Hotel-keepers, livery-stable-keepers, tobacconists, and a host of others would simply have to close their establishments if the statute requiring every bill to be sent in to the tutor immediately it exceeds £5 were enforced. The parents of nine-tenths of their customers would emphatically refuse to be responsible for such needless and extravagant luxuries as sumptuous suppers, hunters, tandems, and gorgeous meerschauts. So these gentry wait quietly till degree time, and then *their* little bills come in upon astounded Paterfamilias. And yet, who ever heard of their being "discommuned"? I remember only one case in my time of a tradesman being "discommuned," and that was not for a breach of this statute, but for a flagrant piece of swindling. It is worth while giving the details of this case, as they will serve to show what some of the less respectable amongst University tradesmen are like.

An undergraduate, who may be aptly described as belonging to that class which the "Claimant" designated as "them as has money and no brains," wished to make a protégé of his, a member of the choir, a handsome present as a souvenir. The lad's father, a printseller—himself a nonentity, but whose handsome wife brought much grist to the mill—was consulted, and it was decided that the present should take the form of a diamond ring. The worthy parent then consulted with a jeweller, and the result was that they palmed off a *thirty* guinea ring upon the unsuspecting noodle for *seventy* guineas, and divided the "swag" between them! The fraud was discovered, and both were discommuned, and had to leave the place. But such esclandres are rare—that is, the malpractices are not often discovered—and into the lesser matters the authorities seldom trouble themselves to pry; and, though enormous bills are run up in defiance of the statute, no attempt is made to enforce the penalty.

That tutorial inspection is sometimes lamentably lax in these matters will hardly, I think, be questioned, when I say that I have known a hairdresser—a functionary privileged to keep a tutor's book—to send in through the tutor such accounts as £7, £10, £15, for a single term; and the same have been put down in the tutor's bill without inquiry or remonstrance! Fancy the average British father's astonishment at seeing £10 set down under the item "barber," for one term of about eight weeks! Is a man who cannot see that there is something preposterously extravagant, something calling for prompt inquiry, in a mere boy running up such an account, a fit person to look after the morals and general welfare of 150 young men?

But it may be asked why cannot Paterfamilias take the law into his own hands, and repudiate debts incurred during the infancy of his son? It is doubtless open to him to do so; but he dreads the trouble and expense and uncertainty of a lawsuit. Juries, being composed for the most part of tradesmen, generally give a very wide meaning to the term "necessaries." And I have a lively recollection of the difficulty of inducing an enlightened jury to regard a forty guinea Bible sold to a minor at the University as a "non-necessary!"

I cannot imagine that any sensible man, even be he the most Conservative of dons, will for a moment uphold this monstrous system of credit. There can be no doubt that it is a scandal and disgrace to our two great Universities, and that it brings untold trouble and misery upon hundreds of English families. Then why should it exist another day? The remedy for the evil is plain enough. Let no tradesman be allowed to give credit to an undergraduate until he has communicated with the college tutor; and let no college tutor authorize a tradesman to give credit unless he has the express sanction of the pupil's father. Let the statute which enacts that every tradesman's account shall be sent in to the tutor as soon as it reaches £5 in amount be rigorously enforced. A blow will then be dealt at this monstrous system of credit, which will soon prove its death-blow, and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge will be rid of the pest which has so long infested them.

There are one or two other blots in the social economy of the Universities which I should touch upon to make my case against

Alma Mater complete; but, as I have already far exceeded due limits, I must reserve them for a future article.

LOVE'S DARTS.

DO not tell me Love is blind—
 Were he so, his aim would fail;
 Do not tell me Love is kind—
 He doth ruthlessly assail.
 Aim'd so true, his poison'd dart
 To the soul hath pierc'd me;
 And to heal me of my smart,
 There is none, sweet maid, but thee.

Pity then my wounded state;
 If from thee I may obtain
 Succour in my hapless fate,
 I will bless Love for my pain.
 If no healing thou wilt send
 On the wings of thy sweet breath,
 Loving thee unto the end,
 I will pray for speedy death.

THOMAS EARP.

THE REVIVAL OF ART.

THE English have long had the reputation of being an unartistic people—not altogether without reason. It is true that we have produced a Reynolds and a Turner, that we support a National Gallery and a Royal Academy; but we have, as a nation, taken little pains to bring art to bear upon our ordinary occupations. We have prided ourselves upon the solidity of our national character, upon our sturdy common sense and freedom from foolish sentiment. It has been the fashion to point to our manufactures and our commerce as the tests and tokens of our greatness, and to look with only pitying toleration, or even with open scorn, upon those pursuits which do not minister to the necessities of our lives or the material luxury of our civilization.

But of late years there has been a reaction against this tendency. Men have begun to perceive that the world around them is not only adapted to their physical needs, but is full of loveliness also; and that all this grace and beauty may, if we choose, become an element in our everyday lives, and tinge the dull workings of our prosaic brains with the splendour of hope and happiness. Some have even gone so far as to assert that, although it is perhaps inevitable that a large number of men should be condemned to spend their lives in making heads of pins, or piecing together broken yarn, or

groping in coal-pits—their intellects stagnating meanwhile; and although it may be shown that, through these arrangements, we secure more pins and more thread than we should otherwise obtain, and also are enabled to rush about from place to place like meteors; yet that, on the whole, these are matters not to be chuckled over so loudly, but whose necessity is to be deplored, and whose influence should in all possible ways be counteracted.

However this may be, the feeling has gained ground that the cultivation of our more delicate and refined sensibilities should at least be carried on side by side with our uninteresting toil or fevered speculation. On all sides a growing interest in art is apparent. The increasing number of our picture galleries, for example; such an event as the opening of the Bethnal Green Museum; the fact that four or five exhibitions of paintings—including that of the old masters at the Royal Academy—can be kept open through the winter, at a time when the majority of the upper ranks of society are absent from town;—all these argue an increased appreciation of art on the part of the great middle classes. Such works, too, as the Albert Memorial give us reason to hope much from our school of sculpture; and the influence of a revived school of architecture is apparent in every great town in the kingdom. But while it is fashionable to patronize artistic pursuits, and to applaud the efforts which are being made to extend their influence, comparatively few persons could give any valid reason for their applause, or explain why they think an art revival likely to be beneficial. In fact, in reply to the question—What is the use of Art? very many would probably confess that they think it of no use at all, except to smooth away an idle hour. They regard it as an elegant amusement. But, if it is really nothing more, it is worth while to inquire whether the game is not a somewhat extravagant one—whether the lifetime which is consumed in producing a great artist is not in reality wasted, and his energies thrown away.

Before we congratulate ourselves on the increase of Art amongst us, it is well to inquire what the results of such an increase are likely to be—whether its natural tendency is towards an indolent luxury and weak sentimentalism, or towards nobler thoughts and purer desires; and if we find

the latter true in some degree, we may further ask, What are the true principles by which great art may be distinguished from its ignoble counterfeit?

Now, because people like to look at pictures or statues, it by no means follows that they have any real appreciation of art. The ideas of ordinary persons are often very vague. They form, for instance, only an imperfect notion of the outward appearance of historical personages or the various aspects of Nature; but when another man's conception of the subject is put before them, not merely in words, but in a visible, tangible form, their own conception takes definite shape also, and they realize the thing as they would never otherwise do. This is the secret of a child's delight in a picture-book. The engravings help to give it definite ideas; and a coloured picture is preferred, because it makes the definition so much the more complete.

Again, coupled with this general desire to "realize our ideas externally," there is a recognition of the artist's skill in enabling us to do so. It is this which gives rise to the admiring exclamation, "Oh, how natural!" which one constantly hears in picture galleries, and this which leads people to gloat over a painted thimble or cabbage, whereas the real article would excite in them but little interest.

It will be admitted that an art which should merely aim to gratify these crude desires would only be entitled to a secondary place amongst the efforts of human genius; and that if no art can do more than this, it is not worth taking much trouble about, and may very well be left to itself.

But, even in the most uncultivated minds, there usually lurks some kind of longing for and appreciation of *the Beautiful*—often founded upon mere ignorant sensualism, or, if guided at all, then only by certain prejudices of education. Thus, for some centuries we were taught that "egg and arrow" mouldings and top-heavy triangular excrescences above our windows, were amongst the chief beauties of architectural form; and had quite come to believe it. We are only just beginning to perceive that they are not indispensable to a fine building. We were also taught to carve garlands instead of growing flowers, to ornament tombs with capering Cupids, and churches with skulls of the lower animals; and being told that these things were beautiful and

consistent, we tried to persuade ourselves that we liked them. The first efforts of Art revival should be directed towards sweeping away these artificialities, and substituting for them a simple and earnest love of that true beauty which is to be found in nature. Whatever aims at promoting our happiness here will surely tend thereto, by teaching us to enjoy the common fields and skies, and the glow of rustic health, rather than the prim correctness of a Louis Quatorze garden, or the borrowed graces of the ball-room.

It is altogether a mistake to suppose that this pursuit of the Beautiful is an unworthy thing. We are not intended to be always hard at work—we should sometimes "consider the lilies." We do not find fault with them because they neither toil nor spin, nor must we suppose that they are useless because they are not good to eat. Their loveliness was surely given them to fulfil some good purposes, and, amongst others, to provide for our gratification. We should be better and wiser if we allowed ourselves more leisure for happiness. The dreadful incubus of money-getting sits all too heavily upon us, and crushes simple pleasures out of our lives. One use of art is clearly to help us in this respect: to unfold to us beauties which we should not observe unaided. We may be familiar with a landscape all our lives, and never take any special interest in it, until a painter puts the scene on canvas, and points out its features to us one by one. Turner saw more in a summer sky than most people; and yet, when he shows us the glory which he found there, we recognize that it was there all the time, and that we too might have perceived it if our capacities had permitted us.

But, while urging that life should have its pleasures, we must recollect that it should not be spent wholly upon them: it has its duties, its higher aims, its future glories. If Art can tell us nought of these, then is it no work for a lifetime. It is the wisdom of men to enjoy the relaxation which the beauties of nature and their pursuit in art afford them; it is their folly to make them not a relaxation but a business. We are surrounded on all sides by great evils and great mysteries, and when we seek to escape them they crush us down in darkness, sometimes in despair. The intense seriousness of life cannot be eluded; it must be bravely faced and its difficulties manfully battled

with. For those who shun contact with its sorrowful realities there is but one alternative: to drown reflection in a gulf of folly, and substitute for a true interest in questions of eternity an affected one in the pleasure-bubbles of time—like prisoners who jest in their chains, as though freedom were but a name, and death-struggle for light and air only a disturbing dream.

To the search for this vain nepenthe, Art may, unfortunately, lend itself with too great ease. The hysterical craving for some new thing, which characterizes our modern life-fever, finds its readiest gratification in sensational pictures and questionable poems. If a work of art has but a sufficiently strong flavour, it will not fail to command a certain amount of attention and applause, so that a railing has to be put up in the Royal Academy, to protect from the pressure of its admirers a clever study of the old *roués* and *harridans* of a German gambling-room.

Must it, then, be always thus? Are pictures and poems to be made only to sell, and for that end to intoxicate? Have they no Noe's voice of warning, or of hope and safety? or shall Art ever minister merely to the eating and drinking of its professors, and the marrying and giving in marriage of its patrons, until the flood of eternity—greater than that of Noe—comes and takes us all away? If an increased interest in meretricious sentimentalities is all that is meant by a "revival of art," it is indeed well to ask whether the revival should be encouraged.

Surely, we may believe better things. Artists not only can mould and reform our ideas respecting the natural world and its perfections, but can in a thousand ways influence our appreciation of moral and spiritual beauty; can strengthen us when in doubt, and solemnize our minds amidst the engrossing excitement of our modern modes of life. They can tell us of the lonely might of the sea, the glory of the hills, the laughter and singing of the corn-clad valleys; of the tender grace of virtue, and the majesty and terror of human passion; of the sin we may still shun, the Paradise we may still regain, the Heaven we may yet aspire to. They have a grand vocation. It is ours to help them to recognize it by humble acceptance of their teaching, and determined rejection of their trivialities.

If the higher purposes of authors, painters, sculptors, and the like, were more generally

sought out and more patiently studied, we should soon witness a Revival of Art which would not merely elevate the public "taste" and amuse the public leisure, but would bear rich fruit of earnestness and purity.

A HINT FROM LOTHAIR.

CHAPTER I. (*continued.*)

AS Nick Foley and Susan swam about the room, threading the crowd without ever touching a skirt, far less an elbow, many dancers paused to watch them. It was a treat to dance with Nick Foley. His partner got all the pleasure of rapid motion, in perfect time with the music, without a touch of fatigue or breathlessness; and every card found room for his name. He was also as good a flirt as he was a waltzer, especially for ladies with other engagements; for he was wonderfully clever at insinuating, without asserting, a devouring passion. The recipient of his half-confidences could not take offence without assuming unduly that she was herself the object on whom his blighted affections were fixed; and yet she could not help strongly suspecting that such was the case. Many ladies, who were not considered coquettes, found this charming. What mortal is not gratified by the possession of power?

Supper was over, most of the guests had gone, and Percy Conybeare came up to Susan Stafford to say good night.

"Oh," said Susan, with a pout, "you have remembered my existence at last, then?"

"I thought that as we are sort of relations, or will be, I ought not to ask you to dance at—at your own party," stammered Percy, confusedly; "so I—I sacrificed myself."

"At the shrine of Miss Beamish?"

"To all your she-guests. Tilly Beamish danced about the best of them, though, just as Nick Foley did of the men—eh?"

"Mr. Foley is a very agreeable companion, sir. He does not think me a bad partner."

"Evidently he doesn't. But then he is a comparative stranger, who has only known you since you came to London."

"Thank you, sir!" said Susan, provokingly. "If he knew me as well as somebody else, he would take equal care to keep his distance, I suppose."

"Of course, that's it," said Percy. "Well, good night and good-bye."

"Good-bye?"

"Yes. I am going to Suffolk to-morrow. My leave is up in a fortnight, and I do not expect to get another chance of hunting this winter at my big brother's expense."

"Good-bye, Percy."

"That is over," said the young fellow to himself, as he lit his cigar under the portico; "thank Heaven!"

But he did not feel very grateful either.

CHAPTER II.

DIPLOMATIC FOLEY.

FOLEY, of Somerset House, had been called Nick—nicknamed, in fact—partly because his godparents had given him the name of Nicholas, but principally in consequence of his invariable success in obtaining any object of schoolboy ambition upon which he had set his heart, if it were to be won by persuasion—a success which his contemporaries at Eton were so inclined to attribute to Satanic agency that Nick seemed to them a very proper name, and it had stuck with the peculiar adhesiveness of Eton and Harrow sobriquets.

On the day after the party he went to his office, wrote several letters on behalf of authority and one or two of his own, read the *Times*, pared his nails—by no means a trifling affair that—called to inquire how Mrs. and Miss Stafford were after their fatigues of the night before, was shown in, made himself very agreeable, returned to his lodgings in Curzon-street, meditated.

"Nice girl that—nicest girl I have met for a long time. No affectation about her. So fresh—enjoys everything so heartily. Pretty, too. By Jove, pretty is no name for it—she is lovely. I did not see so charming a face and figure last season. Worth having, too. If Pigott is right—and he always is—she has got twenty thousand of her own, besides being an only child. And old Stafford is a warm man. He got a lot of money with his wife; and the estate in Suffolk is a good third-class property. Confound that fellow, Conybeare! I should like to cut his throat. Abominable shame to tie her up to an idiotic skunk like that—it is evident that she does not care a half-penny for him. How should she? Whereas she has taken a fancy to me—no doubt of it. To think that I could win her if he were out of the way! Luck is all in this hole of a world. And Sir Roger would not object—my family is a better one than

Conybeare's, and he thinks a deal of that; and the mother likes me as well as anything but an easy-chair. It is the property does it. In the matrimonial stakes the top weight wins, and I am handicapped out of it. Can't I win by a bit of jockeying? This Conybeare does not care a rap for the girl herself, and he is such an arrant fool that one ought to be able to do something with him—make him bolt, or turn rogue. But he is as cold-blooded as a toad, and cased in an armour of stupid, passive conceit and egotism, which seems impenetrable—at least, I can't find a joint."

"No, sir. Missis thought you would like a chicken to-day, for a change."

He had spoken his finishing thought aloud, and the servant, entering at the moment to prepare the table for his dinner, imagined the reference to be to the meal.

"Very good, Mary," he replied, for he was rarely disconcerted; "though certainly Mrs. Filtch has original notions of what a change is."

"Thank you, sir," said Mary, innocently.

Foley, who preferred dining at his lodgings to inhaling the odour of other people's meals at restaurant or club, was fed principally upon soles and poultry.

This astute young man was quite alive to the disadvantage of entertaining unpleasant thoughts at meal-times; so he set up his favourite book on a rest at his side for a companion, and if I have succeeded at all in depicting his social tastes you will have little hesitation in naming that pet work—it was "*Lothair*." He ate and read; sipped his claret and water and read; and, the meal concluded, he continued reading while he smoked a mild cigarette. What "*Napier's History*" is to the soldier, or "*Jorrocks's Haunts*" to the sportsman, that was "*Lothair*" to him. Other writers had dealt with fashionable life, but their dukes and earls were drawn from the inner consciousness: these were depicted by one who knew the originals personally.

Suddenly a light came into the reader's eyes, which wandered from the page, and were fixed on the wall opposite. An idea had flashed into the brain behind them, which might be expressed thus—

"I have a cousin who was a clergyman of the Church of England, and is now a Romish priest. He lives in London. I am pretty intimate with him. He has converted my aunt, Lady Delafade, whose house is a

regular mission establishment, though her dinners are good and her 'at homes' pleasant. So that I often fancy that Disraeli must have mixed her up in his ingredients. This Conybeare is a Ritualist. Sir Roger Stafford takes in the *Record*. Eureka!"

Whatever may be the case with Italians and Spaniards, the power of carrying on an intrigue is very rare in Englishmen. Just try to elaborate the plot of a novel or drama, and you will find that it is no light task to imagine one; and from that to acting the part of a conventional Jesuit is a seven-leagued step. Nick Foley, however, was an exceptional Briton, and working out a tortuous policy was a delight to him, enhanced in the present instance by the value of the prize he hoped to gain. Flirtation had been his principal amusement for some years; but he had never had success so much at heart as now. I do not mean to say that he had taken the disease of love in a very violent form; he had been vaccinated too often for that.

"After-loves of maids and men
Are but dainties drest again."

But he had caught it for all that. And then the money!

He called at his Romanized aunt's house that very evening, and found his priestly cousin there. The first moves in the game were simple enough. Lady Delafade was very zealous, and had got into trouble more than once with the legal authorities for endeavouring to draw heretical lambs into the folds of her church against the desire of their natural guardians; so that her spiritual directors, warned by the scandal, had been obliged to restrain her lately; and she was as ready as a leech for any legitimate exercise of her functions.

She had hopes of her nephew, who always declared himself open to conviction, and tending towards conversion—which, indeed, he was, if he saw a fair prospect of immediate and temporal reward;—and she began at him that evening, lamenting his worldliness.

Nick listened attentively, defended himself feebly, and dexterously led the conversation to Timothy Conybeare, playing his game so neatly that his aunt pressed him to bring him to one of her parties.

The priestly cousin was more reserved. He had suffered imprisonment for—allegorical—lamb-stealing on one of the occasions

above alluded to, and had learned caution. But Nick noticed that he received all his allusions to Timothy Conybeare's property, steadiness, weakness, and ecclesiastical leanings, in a digestive manner. The fish that sucks the bait up with the least fuss gorges it most completely; and the schemer went to bed happy.

How he drew Timothy Conybeare to Lady Delafade's house in the following week would be too long to tell: it is enough that he managed it in the most natural manner. Timothy went, saw, and was conquered. The young man had not many admirable points; but there was one good thing about him, he had a great respect for religion. A feeble intelligence, trying to grapple with scientific discoveries, is too apt to jump certain difficulties with the leaping pole of scepticism. "Whatever cannot be mathematically proved is false" is a very convenient aphorism for the shallow mind, as the sensation of feeling no respect for what other people reverence is pleasing to a vain one. Timothy escaped both these snares. Having certain religious convictions, he stuck to them without shame; and every honest man must pat him on the back for that, be his own opinions what they may.

This redeeming quality in the man made him fall into the Foley trap with unhopedor readiness, however. No doubt he was principally drawn towards the new society he now mixed with by a growing belief, the germ of which had long been sown, that their religion was the true one; but, certainly, the attention which was paid him was exceedingly attractive. The great desire of his soul had ever been to be courted, listened to, made much of; and in Lady Delafade's circle he found himself appreciated as he had never been before. His life was now passed with his new friends, and he entirely neglected his old ones. Nick Foley's task had proved an easy one indeed. All he had to do was to set his puppet in a groove and give it a push, and on it shot of its own accord. So that the judicious schemer was able to devote his whole unofficial time and attention to paying his court to Susan Stafford and her parents; and he was well satisfied with his success.

"Really, a very pleasant young man—so attentive to those older than himself," said Sir Roger.

"Yes, and so considerate for invalids," replied his wife.

"And so well, one may almost say highly, connected," replied Sir Roger, tossing back the shuttlecock of praise.

"He is evidently smitten with Susan," said the lady.

"Timothy is acting in a very singular manner; he has not been near the house for a fortnight. He is undoubtedly a very fair match; but Susan shall not be thrown away upon any one who neglects her."

"And us."

"I wonder where he spends his time—he is still in London."

Here the servant announced Mr. Foley.

"Ah, Foley, you are just the man. Can you tell us what Conybeare does with himself?"

"Do you not know?" cried Foley, in surprise. "Then perhaps rumour may be scandal."

"What does rumour say?"

"That he is preparing for admission into the Roman Catholic Church, and that my aunt, Lady Delafade, is to be his god-mother."

Sir Roger made an incongruous observation.

"My dear," said his wife.

"Well, I can't help it. That a man who was on the point of becoming a member of my family should turn Papist! It's—it's horrible! It's abominable! It's insulting! It's—it's—"

"My dear Sir Roger," put in Nick, "I am so sorry I spoke. I thought, of course, that you approved of the proposed change. And, after all, I see so little of Lady Delafade since she adopted opinions differing so very much from my own; and I am the last person she would take into her confidence. So the report may not be true."

But it was; though Foley did not know it, having put his hopes into form at the spur of the moment.

Not only did Timothy Conybeare "go over to Rome" in the conventional sense—he went to that mural bone of contention physically, and was welcomed, and rejoiced over, and made much of. He learned to lament loudly over the sacrilegious treatment of the Pope, and curse, not loudly but deeply, the Italian Government. His projected marriage with Susan Stafford was definitively broken off, which was a great relief to the young lady.

"How well she carries it off," said certain ladies, loath to believe the little effort it

caused her to appear indifferent to the loss she had sustained.

Nick Foley chuckled and crowed, and would have liked to hug himself, if writers recording that acrobatic performance had but given directions for its accomplishment. He thought that it would be in bad taste to offer himself as a substitute, for a few weeks; but was content to wait, and watch, and pay his court, so excellent did he esteem his chance.

In the meantime he sent his copy of "Lothair" to be bound in Russia, with gilt edgings.

CHAPTER III.

"THANK YOU, MR. FOLEY."

I DO hope that no one suspects me of daring to think flippantly of a fellow-creature for changing his creed, but fear that persons exist who might force that construction upon my simple little narrative. "Timothy Conybeare is weak and foolish; Timothy Conybeare turns Roman Catholic; therefore all who turn Roman Catholics are considered by the narrator to be weak and foolish." Such fallacious reasoning is not uncommon; and I can only protest that I have the greatest respect for men who change their religion or politics from conscientious motives: it shows that they are capable of earnestness, at all events; and that is a refreshing quality in the midst of the elegant indifference which characterizes our artificial modern life.

One sleety, thawing morning, Lucy Stafford sat at the piano, singing Tennyson's words and playing Sullivan's music, when a second voice suddenly struck in—

"I'll be King of the Queen of the Wrens,
All in a nest together."

Lucy had fancied herself alone; so she jumped.

"Oh, Percy! Is it you?"

"Yes. Are you surprised to see me?"

"I thought you were at Aldershot, you know."

"Error. I have got leave on urgent private affairs."

"About—about Timothy?"

"Well, yes—in a sort of way. Oh, Lucy! surely you know my secret?"

Lucy grew very pale, and her hands trembled. Percy seemed to have a ball in his throat.

"I dare say you don't," he continued.

"I did my best to hide it, even from my—"

self. Oh, you pretty! I have been in love with you ever since we spelt over 'Jack the Giant-Killer' together, and never knew it until I heard you were to marry my brother. That was why I kept out of your way; and I meant to do so altogether, till I had quite got over it, and could make a sister of you. But now you are free, I cannot hold my tongue any longer. I am only a poor sub, I know; but then I am very fond of you, and Timothy never appreciated you properly. And I always fancied you would like me, if you might, and were not engaged to him. And here you are in London, and lots of fellows will be after you, and so I must speak up for myself at once. And I find you practising the songs out of my little present, and I hope that is a good omen. Don't cry so, pretty! What do you cry for? Hang it, you will make me cry too, if you go on like that, just as when the rocking-horse went over with us—don't you remember? Are you crying because you are sorry to give me pain?"

"No."

"Why, then?"

"I don't know. It's so sudden—I can't say."

"But look here, Lucy, I am not too late, am I? Some other fellow—Foley for example—has not been spoiling my chance?"

"No, Percy. But, really, it's such a new idea to me; and—and I was still engaged to your own brother a fortnight ago!"

"All right, Lucy. We will not speak about it again for the present," said Percy, quite radiant. "I would not have distressed you by being in such a hurry, only I was in such a fright, you know. There, dry your eyes, and let's talk of something else. I want to hear the particulars about Timothy's conversion, poor fellow."

After luncheon, Percy had a private interview with Sir Roger, who lamented the turn affairs had taken.

"I hoped that we should have been more closely connected, my boy," he said. "Ah, why were you not born first?"

"I would have been if they had consulted me, you may be sure, Sir Roger."

And then he proposed himself as a substitute.

"Bless me!" said Sir Roger, scratching his nose with excitement. "Timothy does not forfeit his estate, you know—I wish he did; and you are not in a position to maintain a wife. Seven thousand pounds of

capital and a subaltern's pay mean bachelorhood."

"I know that I am very presumptuous, but I can't help it," replied Percy, pitifully.

"Well, you see, Percy, I like you very much—always did; but property looks to property—and position. Now, you may be a subaltern for years."

"Three of the lieutenants above me are poor men. I shall get the next step but one."

"I doubt it; they are going to abolish purchase in the army."

"And in society, Sir Roger?"

"What?—eh? Hum!—that is all cant, my boy. Young ladies are not sold—entering into a partnership is not an affair of mutual purchase."

"I see. But look here, sir. If Timothy turns priest—and it is not unlikely, for he never cared for fun—he cannot marry, you know; and so my heirs would come in for the Suffolk place, after all."

"There is something in that," grunted Sir Roger. "Well, we will think the matter over. You are young yet—let us see what happens. By the bye, what does Susan herself think of the matter?"

"She always liked me better than Timothy when we were all little together," said Percy; "and I don't think she would mind—if you consented, sir," he added, diplomatically.

"You have taken me quite by surprise, Percy," said Sir Roger, finally; "and until you have a definite answer from me, I do not wish this matter to be spoken of. You understand?"

This last proviso was unfortunate for Mr. Nicholas Foley, who, but for it, would probably have escaped the humiliation of making Susan an offer in form, and being declined with thanks, like a worthless manuscript. His disgust was in no degree mitigated when, Sir Roger having given his consent, Percy Conybeare was at liberty to talk about his hopes of felicity.

"To think," said the too clever Nick, who had a horsey vein in him, which always came out when he was much excited—"to think that I should have been making the running for another horse, and one in *that* stable, too!"

TABLE TALK.

AMONG the various objects of horticultural art, in its application to the decoration of houses, to be shown at the forth-

coming Vienna Exhibition, will be improved appliances for what is called window gardening, and for the construction of ferneries and conservatories on a miniature scale for the interior of houses. Messrs. Radclyffe, of High Holborn, have invited us to inspect the cases of their manufacture, designed for exhibition in the Austrian capital. They are made on improved principles, allowing free access of air to the plants growing in them, and the windowcases allow of the opening of the window in the ordinary way for ventilating a room to be carried out as usual; while the effect of the ferns and plants growing in the cases is very beautiful. Where a window has a bad "look-out," we should suggest the use of these Belgravian cases in preference to any other way of getting rid of the ugly prospect of dirty walls or roofs. The bit of green is always something pleasant for the eye to fall on.

IT APPEARS that the legal status of a married woman is not only troublesome to the legislators of this country. Our colonies are considering the matter for themselves, and the *Canada Law Journal* says:—"In our Ontario House there is a perfect craze on the subject, as evidenced by the bills introduced this session. The old common law notion, that husband and wife are one person, is being rapidly destroyed. Legislation is now tending in the direction of making the wife 'the best man of the two.'" The minor idea of separate estate is now merged in the larger idea of separate existence. The old idea of unity of interest and unity of purpose, producing domestic bliss, is exploded. It is now supposed that families can be better brought up by having two heads to the house, and two houses also, if thought desirable. Dependence of the wife on the husband is a thing of the past. Wives must be taught to depend on their separate estates, and if that be found insufficient, the ability to insure the lives of their husbands, and collect the insurance money, however sudden or mysterious the deaths of the husbands, will be all that is necessary to replenish the purse of the sorrowing widow. All that now is required to cap such legislation is to declare that every woman shall be a man, the provisions of nature to the contrary notwithstanding.

LIKE an old-fashioned parson, we are obliged to indulge in "more last words"

about the Liverpool Customs affair. But while we follow the custom of reverend gentlemen of two generations back, we will not imitate their prolixity. Her Majesty's Commissioners sent us a verbatim report of Mr. Dent's evidence as taken on the day of the memorable inquiry. The omissions made in their first report of his evidence were supplied in this document in red ink, to show where portions of the matter had been left out. Her Majesty's Commissioners complain that Mr. Dent said, in his reply to their manifesto, that they had "manipulated and distorted" his evidence. I am satisfied the Board of Customs had no such intention, and I hope this statement will satisfy the Board.—*Ed. O. A. W.*

A CORRESPONDENT: I send you a curious letter as a pendant to the very singular specimen you published in a recent number. It is from Mr. G. Hills, acknowledging the receipt of a coal ticket. The coal ticket in question was posted in Oxford, without any letter, on Feb. 13, 1873. The outside address was "Mrs. R—, Rebtorey House;" the inside address was "Rev. R—, Oxford;" and this is the letter:—"DEAR SIR—i Reseved your coal Ticket And it Come very except Bell (acceptable) it shoed (showed) you Ad Not quite Forgotten Me Tho you you Are So Far A Way i Ad No Firing At The Time. i Hop(e) you Are Giting Beter it Was The Best valentine i Ad i Can Ashure you From your Most Humbell survant G Hills + simonds Row."

FRENCH COOKERY has become naturalized in this country at the tables of the rich, where the dinner served in the Russian style, and prepared by a French artist, is every day a matter of course. But the lower, middle, and poorer classes have not yet acquired a taste for what they contemptuously describe as slops and kickshaws. That there is more lavish waste with those classes than with many others is only too well known, and the prejudice that exists against any attempt at change is perhaps too great to be overcome in this generation. There is no class with which art is more completely at a standstill than with ordinary English cooks. Their faith and practice may be said to begin and end with the Plain Joint, "with trimmings"—like Mr. John Smauker's "swarry"—pastry and vegetables. And this proverbial liking of John

Bull's progeny for "a good cut out of a good plain joint" does more to keep meat at a high price than anything else that bears upon it. Nor do we expect our housekeepers to derive much benefit from "German National Cookery for English Kitchens," a new work on cookery recently published, the contents of which include "practical descriptions of the art of cookery as performed in Germany; including small pastry and confectionery, preserving, pickling, the making of vinegars, liqueurs, and beverages warm and cold; also the manufacture of the various German sausages." As to the last item, we do not believe that even the Emperor William's chef could add much to the metropolitan sausage maker's information on the great sausage meat mystery. In that matter, civilization can no further go. But we find a goodly amount of recipes new to us in the book. Sauerkraut, of course, has a prominent place. Salads, of which the Germans eat more freely than we do. One of the best is a herring salad, though honest herring is good in all ways. In a salad, the fish is to be chopped small, and mixed with onions, apples, pepper, and potatoes, with a sauce of oil, vinegar, and cream poured over it. The use of butter, cream, and especially of eggs, is very extravagant in many of these German recipes. There are some new things in soups. "Fasten suppen," for the present season of Lent, is meagre enough for the heart of any yearling curate. Soups whose basis is milk, wine, and fruit, read good, but we know where to look for the proof of the pudding. Several dishes in jelly, as trout, eels, and poultry—"Ge-flügel in Aspic"—are suggestive of epicurean delight. At Michaelmas one might eat one's goose stuffed with chestnuts, prunes, and apples, instead of the sage and onion stuffing that usually accompanies the bird of wisdom. Partridges and pigeons are in season then, and may be tried roasted with vine leaves and rashers of bacon; while at all seasons the national "Klöße"—little force-meat balls, compounded of bread, coarsely ground meal, meat, fish, and eggs, or beef, spiced highly and stewed in beer—may be experimented on by the English Apicius. There is no more appetizing thing than the Barmecide banquet afforded by the theoretical study of such a book as the one under notice. With a little imagination, one can enjoy the manifold delights of these piquant dishes, with the incalculable advan-

tage of not having the indigestion that would assuredly follow the too bodily gratification of the experimenting gourmand.

THE UNIVERSITY BOAT-RACE, about which we read so much in the papers for a month before it comes off, seems to require as many curious and technical terms as "our own correspondent" imports into his account of a horse-race. The Cambridge men, we are told, are not "up to sliding." Though many readers of the papers will not understand this phrase, few probably will connect it at this season with exercise on the ice. From the general to the particular. The *Pall Mall* says: "Turnbull (5) is young and overgrown; he is short in his swing back; at the same time he is improving daily. Lecky-Browne (4) has a 'bucket' forward, and finishes his stroke in his lap instead of at his chest, but he does plenty of work. Robinson (3) is not in such good form as last year; his recovery from the chest is very dead, and he has no beginning to his stroke." This stroke without a beginning is perhaps more singular than the bucket forward, or Mr. Robinson with the dead recovery from the chest. To turn to the Oxford crew, we find they are "tidy on the feather"—which expression has, probably, no reference at all to their feathering on the tide. In the interests of readers who are not au fait at the doings of the sporting world, we wish that reports of races of all sorts could be managed with a little less slang. We believe they would be quite as intelligible as they are at present.

ERRATUM: In an article on "Literary Kickshaws," which appeared in our last number, the lines—

"Un trop tendre homme a des remords cuisants
(Un trottant-drom-a-daire mort cuisant)"!?

were printed with an error in the second line, which read—

(Un tro-Haut-drom-a-daire mort cuisant)"!?

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W.C. All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. No unaccepted MSS. will be returned until a written application has been made for them.

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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXXI.



UT where was Venn?

He was engaged at a funeral; no other, indeed, than that of Mrs. Peck herself. The old lady was dead—not in consequence of her grand-daughter's elopement; because, when she found that little difference would be made in the allowance, she was a good deal more comfortable without her than with her. She died of some disease much more commonplace than a broken heart, one for which the doctor brought her little phials of physic and Hartley Venn pint bottles of port. As for the disappearance of the girl, that affected her chiefly in lowering the position she had hitherto held in the Row. The transportation of a son, or the disappearance of a

daughter, is held in some circles to be as much a disease as the scarlet fever. It is a thing which happens, somehow, in many most respectable families, and is not to be accounted for or fought against.

The old woman grew worse instead of better, and presently kept her bed. Then Hartley got a nurse for her, and used to look in once a week or so to see how she was getting on. One day the inevitable message from across the River came to the dame in bed, and she immediately sent for Hartley, in great trouble lest she should have to begin the journey before he arrived. But he was in time.

"Is it about Lollie?" he asked, expecting some message of forgiveness or love to the girl.

"No—no," she answered, impatiently shaking her venerable head. "Drat the girl, with her fine learning and her ways! It's myself this time, Mr. Venn, and time enough too, I think. All the things I've seen you give that child, and never a thing for me."

Hartley almost burst into a fit of laughter, it was so grotesque.

Here she was seized with a fit of coughing that nearly finished her off altogether.

"Oh, dear, dear! The time's come, Mr. Venn, when you can make amends for your selfishness, and give *me* something too."

"My good soul, haven't I given you everything you want? Do you want more port wine?"

"Better than that," she gasped. "I want a Funeral. I haven't complained, have I, sir? Not when I see the child decked out that fine as the theayter couldn't equal it, I haven't murmured; because, says I to myself—oh, dear, oh, dear!—Mr. Venn, he's a good man, he is—he means it all for the best; and the time will come. And now it has come. I want a Funeral. If I was to die to-night," she went on, "you'd save all the 'lowances, and the doctor, and the port wine. Think of that, now."

"I don't see what you want. A funeral?"

"When Peck died, we'd had a trifle saved and put by. That was fifteen year ago. And we did it properly. His brother came from Hornsey, and his two cousins from Camberwell, and we all went respectable to Finchley. After the Funeral—it was a cold day—we went to the Crown, and sat round the fire and cried, as was but right, and drank gin and water hot. Oh, dear! oh, dear!—and all enjoyed ourselves. Let *me* have a Funeral too, Mr. Venn."

He promised, and she died that very night, chuckling over the great happiness that had come to her. The two cousins from Camberwell, who had not been seen since the demise of the late Mr. Peck, could not be found, but the brother from Hornsey turned up; and Venn, anxious that the old man should really have a good time of it, went to the funeral himself, and gave him after it more gin and water than he could carry.

This pious act accomplished, he went to the club and dined, going afterwards to Lynn's, where he sat till twelve, discoursing of funeral ceremonies of all nations; so that it was after midnight when he got Mary's missive. He trembled when he read it. The blood rushed to his head, because it could mean but one thing—his little girl. And as he hurried down the streets to her lodging, he could find no formula for the prayer of his heart, which was for her safety and—for her purity.

Everybody had gone to bed; but Mary heard his step at the door, and let him in herself:

"What is it?" he whispered, as she proceeded quickly to bolt the door again and put up the chain—"what is it, girl?"

"Hush!" she answered. "Pull off your boots. I'll carry them. She's up there, and asleep."

He crept up. On the bed there lay, still sleeping, her face upon her hand, her cheek all pale and blanched, her long hair streaming back upon the pillow, wrapped warm in all Mary's blankets, his Lollie—his little girl. He made a movement towards her, but Mary held him back.

"Not yet—wait. She has been sleeping since one o'clock this morning. Let her be. Something dreadful has happened to her. Sit down and wait."

"Notice, Mr. Venn. She's got the same

clothes on as she used to have. She must have been going back to you. Poor thing! poor thing! See here—her jacket, and hat, and blue frock, and all—I know them, every one. And look here."

Very softly she laid back the blanket which covered her left hand. On the third finger was a wedding ring.

Hartley bent down and kissed the ring. His tears fell fast upon the little fingers.

"When will she wake?" he whispered.

"I don't know—anything may wake her."

"I shall stay here," he replied; and sat down by the bed, in the only chair in the room.

Mary hesitated a moment, and then lay down on the extreme edge of the other side of the bed. Hartley noticed then that between her and Lollie lay her child.

In two moments she, too, was asleep; and the watch of the night began in earnest. Hartley saw how Mary had laid all her blankets and wraps upon his child, and left herself with nothing, not even a shawl. He took off his own great-coat—he was ever a kind-hearted man—and laid it over her shoulders, with a corner of blanket across her feet, and then sat down again, shivering—the fire was quite out, and the room was getting cold—and waited.

Presently the candle went out suddenly, and then there was darkness and silence, save for the breath of the sleepers.

The tumult of his thoughts in this stillness was almost more than his nerves could bear. It was not till the girl left him that he had at all realized the hold she had upon his affections, and her place in his life. He had been very lonely without her. He had longed with all his soul to see her again. There was no moment, now, when he was not ready to forgive everything, nor when his arms were not open to her. The love he had for the girl was the outcome of so many years. She had so twisted and twined the tendrils of affection round him, that when she went away he was like some old tower from which its ivy, the growth of centuries, has been rudely and roughly dragged away. With the child coming every day, full of fresh thoughts, and eager for knowledge, there was always some compensation for the neglect of the world. Laura was his family: she it was who preserved his life from utter loneliness and disappointment. While he watched the growth of her mind, he forgot that his own was, as he was fond

of calling it, a Wreck. While he listened to her ideas, he forgot that his own were ruthlessly consigned to waste-paper baskets; and with her bright face and childlike ways, he had forgotten that he was getting on for forty—a poor man still, and disappointed.

All these things crowded into his mind as he sat there, and a great hunger seized his heart to have all things back again as they were before. He had been growing dreary of late; the old things ceased to please him; there was little interest left in life; he felt himself getting old; he awoke in the morning without the former feeling that another day would bring its little basket of pleasure; he lay down at night with the new feeling that here was finished another of those gray-coloured days which go to make up the total of a sad life. Would that all could be as it had been—that the step of the child could be heard again upon the stairs, and the lessons renewed where they left off. But the waters run not back to the mountains. Old Mrs. Peck was lying buried in Finchley Cemetery. Laura was a woman; a wedding ring was on her finger; her long eyelashes lay wet with tears upon her cheeks—those cheeks that never knew a tear while he was there to kiss them. She moaned in her dreams who had once only smiled; and nothing could come back but the old, old, inextinguishable love.

So, minute by minute, the slow night passed along. Hartley sat through it motionless, in the dark, catching the breathing of the sleeper, though he could not see her face. After many hours, there came through the window the first faint streaks of a November dawn, growing stronger and stronger. When it fell on little Georgie's face, it half roused him from his sleep, and reaching out his arms to find his mother, the boy laid his little hand on Lollie's neck, and she awoke. Woke with a start, and a rush of thoughts that made her half sit up and stare at the figure of Hartley, indistinct in the morning gloom, with strange, wild eyes.

"Where am I?—where am I?" she murmured, sinking back.

Hartley bent over and raised her head, kissing her brow in his quiet, old-fashioned way.

"Open your eyes, my little girl. You are come home again. Thank God, you are come home again," the tears raining thick upon her face.

She hardly as yet comprehended; but at

last, sitting up in bed, she looked about the room trying to remember. The bitter knowledge came at last; and, throwing her arms about his neck, she laid her face against his, crying pitifully—

"Oh, Mr. Venn—Mr. Venn!"

This was all her prayer. Hartley could not trust himself to answer. He clasped her in his arms, he held her face to his and covered it with kisses, he called her a thousand names of love and endearment—his child, his Lollie, his little daughter. And then Mary showed herself to be a young woman of really a high order of feeling; for, awakened by the voices, she got up from the edge of the bed on which she had slept all night, and catching up the still sleeping boy, disappeared to some other part of the house—I fancy to the back kitchen below—and left them alone.

Presently, as the light grew stronger, Lollie recovered herself a little, and in a quick, nervous way began to tell him her tale. Hartley listened with grinding teeth. She told all—extenuating nothing, hiding nothing, save some of the cruelty of her husband's last words. He stopped her then.

"You wrote to me from the place where you were married, my dear?"

"Yes. Mr. MacIntyre was to take the letter."

"And again from Vieuxcamp?"

"I wrote twice from Vieuxcamp."

"I got no letter at all, poor child—not one. They suppressed them all. Go on. It was the day before yesterday. Where did you go when you left him?"

"I walked—I don't know. I walked all night. You were not in your chambers. It rained. I walked about all night. Somebody took away my purse. What was I to do, Mr. Venn? Where was I to go? A woman in Covent-garden gave me some coffee—"

"Tell me her name, Lollie—tell me her name."

"I don't know. She had a stall at the corner of Bow-street."

"She had a stall at the corner of Bow-street," he repeated.

"And she went home at seven o'clock."

"Home at seven?" he said. "All night, Lollie?—all the cold, wet, dark night? Oh, child, child!—why did you not come to my rooms, and sit on the stairs till I came home?"

He held her close to his heart.
 "All night—all night! Lollie, Lollie, my heart is breaking for you. One thing you have forgotten. Tell me the name of your husband."

"Philip Durnford."

"Arthur's cousin!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

PHILIP DURNFORD—Arthur's cousin, of whom he was always speaking. It seemed a new complication. Venn sat back in his chair, pondering.

"Promise me something, Mr. Venn," Lollie whispered—"promise me something. Do not harm Philip."

"Harm him!" he answered, with a fierce light in his eyes.

"For my sake, do not try to see him. Do not go in his way."

"My poor child."

"But promise."

"Lollie, you ask too much. But what harm can I do him? I cannot go round to his tent with a knife, as a child of Israel would have done, and stab him till he die. I wish I could. I cannot even ask him to fight a duel. I would if I could. My aim should be steady and my eye straight. Tell me what harm I can possibly do to him. True, I could go to him with a stick, and so relieve myself."

"No, Mr. Venn, you will not do that."

"Do not talk about him, child—do not talk about him. Let us talk of other things. And, first, to make you well. My child, how hot your head is. I will go and send a doctor to you. Lie down and sleep again."

"I should like some tea," she said, sinking back exhausted. "I am thirsty. My hands are burning, and my head swims. Send me Mary, please."

He hurried downstairs, and brought up Mary; and then, promising to return in the afternoon, went away to send her a doctor. That done he returned to his chambers, feeling lighter and happier than he had done for months past. So happy was he, that he set to work and burned no less than three immortal essays, because he suspected that they were deficient in joy and thankfulness—two qualities which he now regarded as essential to a well-balanced mind. That sacrifice completed, he sat down before the fire and fell fast asleep, thinking of how the good old days were to be restored to him.

When he awoke it was three o'clock, and

he had had no breakfast. That was a trifling consideration, because coffee can be always made. He broke bread with a sense of happiness and gratitude that almost made his modest meal a sacrament, and then went back to his patient.

But on the stairs he was met by Mary.

"You can't come in, Mr. Venn. Lollie is very ill, and the doctor is with her. Don't be frightened. She's had too great a shock. You may come to-morrow."

He turned away, all his joy dashed. As he shut the door behind him, he ground his teeth savagely, and stood still for a moment.

"If my child"—shaking his hand at the silent heavens—"if my little girl does not get better, I will kill him—I will kill him! A life for a life. I will kill him!"

Then he wandered about the streets, following as nearly as he could the wanderings of Lollie during that night, and trying to imagine where she would stand for shelter. The fancy seized him to find out the man who had robbed her. It was from a court on the north side of Oxford-street. He went along, turning into every court he could find, and prowling up and down with a vague sort of feeling that he might see the man, and know him by his long legs, his bare feet, and his crouching like a wolf. There were a good many wolf-like creatures about, but none that quite answered to Lollie's description; and he desisted from the search at last, calling himself a fool, and so went home.

Then another notion seized him. He ordered the night porter to call him at four o'clock, and so went to bed.

At four he was awakened, and got up.

"Most extraordinary," he murmured, shivering and lighting a candle, "the sensation of rising in the night. I quite understand now why the labouring classes, who always do it, never take tubs."

He dressed hastily, and went out into the court. The very last light had disappeared in the square. The last roysterer was gone to bed. The last student had knocked off work for the night.

"It gives one," he said to himself, "an Antipodean feeling. I feel as if I were on my head. Now I begin to understand why agricultural labourers are never boisterous in their spirits. This is enough to sadden Momus!"

Not a soul was in Holborn when he passed through the gate. He buttoned his

great-coat tighter across his chest, and strode up the street, his footsteps echoing as he went.

"I wish it would rain," he said, "then I should understand the misery of it better."

He left Holborn, and passing down the bye-streets, made directly for Covent-garden. There he found the market in full vigour—the carts all seeming to come in at the same time. He peered about in the faces of the drivers and workmen.

"An expression of hope," he said, "or rather of expectation. We have had our bed—they seem as if they were always looking for it. Very odd! Life pulled forward—breakfast at four—dinner at ten—tea at two. Bed, if you are a Sybarite, about seven; if you are a reveller, at nine. Where is my coffee-woman?"

He came to a stall, where a fat, red-faced woman was lading out cups of coffee to an expectant crowd. He stood on one side and let the crowd thin, and then humbly advanced.

"A cup of coffee, if you please, ma'am."

She poured it out for him.

"Drink it, and go home to bed," she said. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, stayin' out all night this fashion."

"I am only just out of bed," said Venn, meekly. "I got out of bed to see you."

"And pray what might you be wanting to see me for, young man? I don't owe you nothing."

"On the contrary, it is I who owe you a great deal," he replied, sitting on the shafts of her coffee cart. "Tell me, my good sou', you were here the night before last?"

"I am here every night."

"Then you remember the young lady who came here."

"I should think I do remember her—the pretty lamb."

Venn took her great rough hand in his, and held it.

"She gave you a locket. Have you got it with you?"

"Yes, it's in my pocket. Wait a bit—wait a bit. Here it is. What do you want with the locket?"

"She has sent me to buy the locket back," he replied, "and to find out where you live. She is with her friends now. You must not ask anything about her—why she was out alone; but she is with her own friends—those who love her. She is ill too—God help her!"

"Amen," said the woman; "and good she was, I swear."

"As good as any saint. See, give me the locket, and tell me where you live. She shall come soon to see you herself. And here is the price of the locket."

He laid five pounds in her hand. The woman looked at the gold—it was as much as ever she had had in her possession, all at once—and then held out her hand again.

"If she's poor, take it back, I don't want it—the Lord love her! If she's rich, I'll keep it for the childer."

"I am rich," said Venn, "because I have her back. Keep the money. And now, tell me where you live."

She shook her head again, and turned away.

"I can't go to bed," he said. "I've had my breakfast, too. What time shall I want lunch, I wonder? What am I to do now?"

It was not quite six o'clock. He strolled along the streets, making mental observations, watching how the traffic began and how it slowly increased. Then he went on the Embankment.

"I have never yet seen the rosy-fingered dawn. Let us contemplate one of nature's grandest phenomena."

A dense fog came rolling up with the break of day, and there was nothing to see at all.

"I am disappointed," he said to himself. "From the description of that lying tribe, the poets, I had expected a very different thing. Alas! one by one the illusions of life die away. Let us go and look after our patient."

The worst was passed; and though the child was hanging between life and death, the balance of youth and strength was in her favour.

After a day or two, they allowed him to enter the sick room and help to nurse. Never had patient a nurse more careful and attentive. In the morning, when Mary went to rehearsal, and in the evening, when she went to the theatre, he took her place, and watched the spark of life slowly growing again into a flame. She was light-headed still, and in her unconscious prattling revealed all the innocent secrets of her life. What revelations those are of sick men in the ears of mothers and sisters who have thought them spotless!

Venn learned all. He heard her plead

with her husband for permission to tell himself, to write, to try and see him. He saw how, through it all, he himself lay at her heart; and lastly, he heard from her lips the real and true story of the last cruel blow that drove her out into the street. What could he do to this man? How madden him with remorse? How drive him and lash him with a scourge of scorpions?

But one morning he found her sitting up half-dressed, weak and feeble, but restored to her right mind. Then Hartley Venn did a thing he had not done for nearly thirty years—you so very easily get out of the habit at Eton—he knelt down by the bedside, her hand in his, and thanked God aloud for His great mercy.

"When I get well again, Mr. Venn," whispered Lollie, "we will go to church together, will we not?"

Then he sat by her while she told him all the story again, and he forgave her again, till the tears ran down both their cheeks; for Hartley Venn was but a great, soft-hearted baby, and showed his feelings in a manner quite unknown to the higher circles.

"But what are we to do with you, Lollie?" he asked, when he had told all his news—how Mrs. Peck was gone, and there was no house anywhere for her. "You could not possibly have gone to live with your old grandmother any more. What shall we do for you?"

"I don't know, Mr. Venn. Do something for Mary. See how good she has been."

"Mary does not want anything, child. When she does she knows where to go for help."

Then he told her all about the coffee-woman.

"I will take you to see her," he said, "as soon as you are well. Here is your locket, my dear, back again. We are to go in the day-time, and I am to prepare her for your visit first. But what am I to do with you? Stay. I will go and ask Sukey? She always knows what ought to be done."

It was really a very serious question. What was he to do with her? He might get her lodgings. But then his own visits would have to be few, so as to prevent talk. He might take a house for her, though that hardly seemed the best thing. But as he walked along to Woburn-place, a brilliant thought flashed across him. Sukey should

take her. A comfortable house, the care of a lady, surrounding circumstances not wholly new, but new enough to have a charm, and a life altogether beyond the reach of any malicious tongues. Nothing could be better. But Sukey might object. He smoothed his face into its sweetest lines. He would diplommatize.

Sukey was in a state of great nervous excitement, in consequence of having been excommunicated. She was of High Church proclivities, and loved, in moderation, the exercise of those observances appointed by her advisers. Naturally, too, she was fond of the society of her clergyman, a gentleman who held rigid views as to fasting and feasting, observing the periods of the former courageously—but with grief and pain—and the latter with an undisguised joy. Both states of feeling he regarded as conducive to a sound spiritual state. And so far he was followed by Miss Venn, who hated a vegetable diet as much as she loved a good dinner. In an evil hour, having been presented with an Angola cat, she christened it St. Cyril. Her director, on discovering this piece of levity, treated it as an offence quite beyond the venial sins common among mankind, and not only ordered her to change the name to Tom, but also enjoined as a penance an octave of cabbage. At this tyranny, her whole soul revolted, and she flew into open rebellion: going over to the enemy's camp, a neighbouring Low Church establishment, where as yet no surplice was flaunted in the pulpit, the Psalms were read, and the service finely rendered. Thereupon she was excommunicated.

She burst forth with all her tale of trouble as soon as she saw her brother. Hartley judiciously gave her the reins, only occasionally murmuring sympathetically.

"Why, Sukey," he said, when she had quite finished, "you can do nothing better than persist. It is the most outrageous tyranny. And such a beautiful animal, too. St. Cyril, come here. Sh—tsh! A lovely cat."

"I thought you hated cats, Hartley."

"As a rule, I do. But not such a superb creature as this. St Cyril—what a beautiful name for a cat! Suggestive of howlings on chimney-tops—I mean, of purrings on the hearth-rug. My dear sister, you have a genius for giving names. When I was a child—when we were children together—you used

to call me Billabelub for short, I remember well."

Sukey began to purr too, falling into the trap baited by flattery as innocently as any creature of the forest.

"I think I chose a good name, in spite of Mr. De Vere. Take a glass of wine, Hartley, and a biscuit. Why do you call here so seldom?"

"The sherry, by all means."

He poured out two glasses.

"Hartley, you know I never take wine in the morning."

"As it is poured out, you may as well drink it. Besides, it will do you good."

She drank it, and appeared to like it.

"But I came to tell you some good news, Sukey," he went on, seeing that the moment had arrived. "My little girl has come back to me."

Sukey said nothing, but looked up sharply.

"Yes. Her husband has ill-treated her."

"Her husband! She has a husband, then?"

"Sukey! Why, how else should she have left me?"

This was a facer. Hartley followed up the advantage.

"Her husband, it appears—"

"Who is her husband, Hartley?"

"Mr. Philip Durnford, lieutenant in the —th Regiment, cousin of Arthur Durnford, whose father used to be a pupil at the Rectory. You remember him thirty years ago?"

"My dear brother. As if I could remember anything so long ago as that."

"True, I forgot. Philip Durnford, I am sorry to say, is not a good man. He made her conceal the marriage, destroyed the letters she wrote to me, forbade her writing any more, and at last ruined himself and turned her out of doors. Lollie has had a hard time, Sukey."

"Where is she now?"

"She had nowhere to go, wandered about trying to find me in my chambers. Kept on missing me, and at last was picked up by a girl whom she befriended two or three years ago, who took her in like a Samaritan, and we nursed her through a fortnight of dangerous illness. She is still almost too weak to be moved."

"You must see her husband, Hartley, at once."

"I think not."

"Then, where can she go? Hartley, you must not begin that old business of having her up to your chambers."

"No, certainly not—that must be put a stop to. I have thought it over. She must go, Sukey—" here he became very impressive—"she must go to the house of some lady, a little, but not too much, older than herself, of a kind and affectionate disposition—my child is dreadfully broken and weak, Sukey—where her wounds may be healed, and we can teach her to forget some of her troubles; where she will have no reproaches, no worries, no hard words."

"Where will you find such a guardian?"

"Where? Here, Sukey, here"—he took her fat little hands in his—"here, my dear. I know no other woman so good and kind as yourself, and no house which will so entirely fulfil all the conditions as your own."

"Mine? Oh, goodness gracious!"

"Yours, Sukey. For there is, I am quite sure, no one in the world whose heart is so soft, and whose house is so comfortable as yours."

She sat silent.

"You know Lollie, too. It is not as if you were strangers. Remember how you used to kiss her when she was quite a little thing."

"I do," said Sukey. "The child's lips were always sticky with jam."

"They were. And it shows," said Hartley, "the kindness of your heart to treasure up this trifling circumstance. Women alone know how to touch the chords of feeling. She was always extravagantly fond of jam. I remember, too, how you used to spread it for her on bread and butter, careful not to give her too much butter for fear of biliousness. The old days, Sukey, the old days!"

He was silent, as if overcome. Then he went on—

"And it is really kind—more kind than I know how to thank you for—to accede at once to my suggestion. I feel as if it came from you. Believe me, sister, I am very grateful."

He kissed her forehead; and the caress, so exceedingly rare from her brother, brought a glow of conscious benevolence to Sukey's cheeks. She almost felt as if she had really suggested the step. Then her heart sank again.

"Well, you know, my dear Hartley, I am

the last person in the world to think of my own comfort."

"You are, indeed, Sukey," he murmured, with a glance at the sherry—"the very last. Always self-denying."

"But what will Anne think?"

Hartley rang the bell, and Anne appeared.

"My sister, Anne—upon my word, Anne, you are getting younger every day—wants to take, for a little while, a young lady into the house. Mrs. Durnford, who is unhappily separated from her husband. You remember her—my ward, Miss Collingwood, that was; but she is a little afraid that it will put you out."

Anne looked troubled.

"Not a young lady who will give trouble or any extra work, but one who wants a comfortable place, and thoughtful people like yourself about her."

"If Miss Venn wants it," said Anne.

"Of course she wants it."

"Then I'm not the one to make objections. And I'm sure the house wants a little brightening up. And you never coming but once in three months, Mr. Hartley."

"I shall come every day, now, Anne. But haven't you got Mr. De Vere?"

This was the clergyman, with whom Anne did not hold.

"Mr. De Vere, indeed!" And Anne retreated.

"Then we will lose no time," said Hartley. "I don't think we can have her tomorrow; but the day after, perhaps."

"The day after? Oh, Hartley, will she be wanting gaiety and fuss, and everything?"

"Lollie? My dear Sukey, she wants quiet. But would it not be a nice thing—a graceful thing—if you would bring her here yourself?"

"If you prefer it, Hartley, certainly. Where is she?"

"Where she has been for the last three weeks. With Mary."

"Mary has got a surname, I suppose. Pray what is the profession of Mary?"

"Mary—I mean, Mrs. Smith, whose—ahem! whose husband is gone to—to—"

"Where is he gone to?"

"How should I know where he is gone to?" replied Hartley, a little irritably, for he did not like being off the rails of truth. "Gone to Abraham's bosom, I suppose. So Mrs. Smith, you know, dances at the

theatre, and supports her child in a creditable way."

"Now, Hartley, I will not—the granddaughter of a Bishop, and all—go to the lodgings of a Dancing Person."

Hartley repressed an inclination to refer to the ancestral glue manufacturer, and only meekly replied that there was no need.

"Bring Laura to your chambers the day after to-morrow," said Sukey, "and I will come and fetch her."

"Do, Sukey, come to breakfast—kidneys, sister. You shall take her away afterwards in a cab. You will be kind to her, Sukey?"

"Of course I will. Oh, dear! there is nothing but trouble. Now we shall have to make things ready. Well, go away, now, Hartley—you will only be in the way. I will come at ten."

OUR PROGRESS IN WEATHER KNOWLEDGE.

THE doings of late at the Royal Institution have been conspicuously dull for all except the most scientific, with one exception—the paper read by Mr. Scott, Director of the Meteorological Office; the results of whose experiences as a prophet are given in this article. M. Arago said that no one who had a scientific character to lose would prophesy weather. It remained for our English Meteorological Office to show the way in the work of supplementing the vaticinations of Zadkiel and Old Moore. If the Director of the Weather Office himself cannot prophesy with effect, it may be asked, who can?

The prediction of the seasons, for any considerable period in advance, is of course the problem whose solution must affect the most important social interests, inasmuch as all the operations of agriculture are necessarily dependent on the varying character of the weather. Recently, in order to afford some practical information as to the effect of the weather on growing crops, an agitation has been set on foot for the organization of a system of telegraphic agricultural weather reports, in order, by a knowledge of the prospects of the harvest, to be able to regulate the price of grain.

In the course of last summer, we made a commencement of giving intelligence as to the probable growth of crops, by adding six inland stations to the list of those which

furnish information for the Daily Weather Report.

Our recent experience of the rainfall of 1872, which was almost unprecedented and certainly unexpected, both as to its amount and continuance, is a fair illustration of the very moderate pretensions which even the most practised meteorologists can make to a knowledge of the probable character of the weather for even two months in advance. We are now receiving abundant notes as to the concomitant phenomena of unusual drought during parts of last year in other regions of the earth, and as to the abnormal relations of barometrical pressure over N.E. Europe on the one hand, and Iceland on the other; but none of these facts throw any light, hitherto discoverable, on the causes of our exceptional weather.

Any one of experience can cite numerous instances of the failure of prophecies of weather based on the popularly received signs, such as the shining of the sun on Candlemas-day; and we shall soon see that the principles on which such prophecies depend are not mathematically correct. It is, nevertheless, undeniable that the movements of birds of passage are apparently directed by a prescience of the coming character of the weather; generally, their arrival may be attributed to the fact that they herald the approach of conditions of weather which have already set in in their home.

It is evident that the changes of weather ought to bear mathematical treatment as well as any other statistical facts, and consequently attempts have been made to apply mathematical reasoning to our experience of the seasons, in order to test whether the popular ideas just alluded to have or have not any real basis of truth.

M. Köppen has examined into the chance of a change of weather at any time, and he finds that *the weather has a decided tendency to preserve its character*. Thus, at Brussels, if it has rained for nine or ten days successively, the *next* day will be wet also in four cases out of five; and the chance of a change decreases with the length of time for which the weather *from* which the change is to take place has lasted.

If we take the case of temperature for five-day periods, we find the same principle to be true; for if a cold five-day period sets in after warm weather, we can bet two to one that the next such period will be cold too: but if the cold has lasted for two

months, we can bet nearly eight to one that the first five days of the next month will be cold too. The chance of change is, however, greater for the five-day periods than for single days.

Similar results follow for the months; but here again the chance of change shows an increase.

If we revert to the instance we first cited, that of rain, the result is *not* that if it once begins to rain the chances are in favour of its never ceasing; all that is implied is, that the chances are against its ceasing on a definite day, and that they increase with the length of time the rain has lasted. The problem is similar to that of human life: the chance of a baby one year old living another year is less than that of a man of thirty.

The practical meaning of all this is, that although we know that a compensating anomaly for all extraordinary weather exists somewhere on the earth's surface—*e. g.*, the very common case of intense cold in America while we have a mild winter, which was most strikingly true last January—there is no reason, as yet ascertained, to anticipate that this compensation will occur at any given place in the course of a year. In other words, when definite conditions of weather have thoroughly established themselves, it is only with great difficulty that the courses of the atmospheric currents are changed.

Attempts have not unfrequently been made to predict the seasons for a long period in advance, but without much success hitherto. One great cause for failure is that accurate meteorological records do not extend beyond the beginning of the century at more than a few stations, and for these we cannot eliminate the local influences altogether. Thus, it is hardly possible to say what has been the approximate temperature of these islands for more than twenty years—a period far too short for the definite recognition of a cycle. The shortest of these cosmical cycles which has been determined is the sun-spot period of $11\frac{1}{3}$ years, according to Wolf; and there are indications of far longer periods, such as 33 years, or even $69\frac{1}{3}$ years, according to Hornstein.

The subject of Weather Telegraphy and Storm Warnings, with which the name of Admiral Fitzroy will always be associated, is worth mention here. Justice, however, compels us to admit that this country was

not the first to issue telegraphic weather intelligence to its seaports; for in the year 1860, when the possibility of introducing such a system was being discussed here in London, the step had actually been taken in Holland, at the instance of Prof. Buys Ballot. At the present time there is not a single European country, except Greece, which has not its own meteorological organization. In most cases telegraphic weather reports are published in the newspapers; while the example set by Le Verrier, about 1858, of the publication of a lithographed daily bulletin has been followed by our own office, more than 600 copies of whose charts are issued daily to subscribers and for exhibition at seaports. Of late years Russia, too, has commenced the publication of a lithographed bulletin.

If we want to see weather telegraphy on its grandest scale, we must cross the Atlantic, where, under the direction of Brigadier-General Myer, no less than three charts are used every day by the Chief Signal Office of the United States at Washington. This undertaking is rendered possible by the fact that the whole organization is military, and that its efforts are almost entirely concentrated on the preparation of these reports, while the telegraphic system of the States is placed at the disposal of the Signal Office for a certain space of time every day. By this means it is rendered possible to publish the chart and report simultaneously in all the principal cities of the States. It is not unimportant to consider what the system costs, as compared with our own. We spend, at the outside, £4,000 a year on our weather telegraphy, when we apportion to it its due share of the expenses of the office; while the vote for the Signal Office, or, to use its familiar designation in the *New York Herald*, for "Old Probabilities," is no less than 250,000 dollars, about fourteen times as much as our expenditure under the same head.

The first thing noticeable about our own system of stations is that we are entirely exposed to the westward, the direction from whence most of our storms come, and that we have little prospect of improving our condition in this respect.

Latterly, an announcement has been made that the Portuguese Government intend to establish a reporting system between the Azores and the mainland, and an application has been made to the Meteorological

Committee to contribute towards the expense. They at once replied that they would be ready to assist in this particular development of weather telegraphy to the extent of their powers.

We have, in the meantime, instituted a comparison between the 8 a.m. reports from Angra do Heroismo in the Azores and from Valencia for the last 2½ years, and we find that there is not a single instance in which we can trace the progress of a storm from the Azores to these islands; the two barometrical curves pursue their respective courses almost entirely independently of each other; and so far from its being true "that no country would benefit by this intelligence (from the Azores) so much as Great Britain," as has been asserted, the *prima facie* evidence afforded by the diagrams is, that the balance of advantage to be gained by the proposed connection would fall to the Azores. It, however, is undeniable that it would be a great advantage to us to know daily what were the atmospheric conditions over the district of the Atlantic where the islands in question are situated.

Our own experience of the value of Transatlantic reports is not satisfactory. For three years we received reports daily (free) from Heart's Content, through the great liberality of the A. A. Telegraph Company, but we did not find them of much practical value; partly because the station was badly placed for wind observations, being in a land-locked bay, and partly because *we can never trust uncorroborated reports from distant stations*. Accordingly, when the committee were asked to pay for the transmission of the reports, they at once decided to discontinue them.

We now come to the practical portion of our subject—the actual *forecasting of the weather*. The only great principle which has been established of late years has been the entire dependence of the wind, as to both its direction and its force, on the barometrical gradient, and not on the absolute height of the barometrical column. This principle is known as Buys Ballot's law. The law is—"Stand with your back to the wind, and the barometer will be lower on your left hand than on your right." As a simple result of this fertile generalization, we find that there is no danger of a gale, unless the gradient, or difference between barometrical readings over a given distance,

exceed 0.6 in. per 50 miles in the district where the gale will be felt. The attempts which have been made to establish a numerical relation between the gradients and the wind-force have not been satisfactory as yet, owing chiefly to the difficulty of eliminating the local conditions which affect the wind. We are also unable, as yet, to say what interval of time elapses between the establishment of the gradient and the setting in of the corresponding wind; and, on the whole, it must be said that, if we trust to the barometer alone, we shall not have sufficient warning of the approach of a gale.

There are several valuable deductions which follow from Buys Ballot's law.

The wind may move either against or with watch-hands, and the former is the more usual direction of gyration. The former of these motions is termed cyclonic, and takes place round a barometrical minimum; the latter, anti-cyclonic, and takes place round a barometrical maximum. The whole of our weather depends on the relative positions and characters of these areas of defect and excess of atmospherical pressure, and the wind systems connected with them.

A storm may be produced by an increase of pressure as well as by a decrease, and some of our most destructive storms—most destructive, because they give us hardly any warning of their approach—are caused by an increase of pressure on the eastern shores of the North Sea, while a depression is advancing over these islands. The storm of February 6, 1870, which levelled the harbour works at Wick, belonged to this class. Their direction is south-easterly.

Almost all of our storms are related to barometrical depressions, and not to elevations. The reason of this has yet to be explained by the mathematicians. If, therefore, we knew about an advancing depression, the shape (including gradients in all directions), direction, and rate of motion, and whether the disturbance was increasing or diminishing in intensity, we should be able to form a fair judgment as to what parts of the coast would be most likely to feel a gale, and from what points of the compass.

There is hardly one of these particulars of which we can gain a sufficient knowledge until the storm is well upon us, so that the issue of warnings to our exposed western

and northern coasts will ever be a matter of great difficulty and uncertainty.

As regards the direction of motion of storms, we have some progress in knowledge to report. Professor Mohn, in his Storm Atlas, has assigned for a few storms the direction and rate of advance, and has shown how both these elements are modified as the storm moves across Scandinavia into Russia. An English meteorologist, Mr. Ley, has also paid attention to the subject; and in his recent work, "The Laws of the Winds in Western Europe," has given charts of the mean paths of depressions for certain months of the year.

Both of these investigators refer the direction of motion to the distribution and condensation of vapour in the atmosphere; and Mr. Ley maintains that the depression itself is generated by excessive rainfall, and that its advance is due to the same cause.

We know that the direction of motion is ruled very much by the position of the areas of high pressure, which are of considerable superficial extent, and, as a rule, are not subject to much motion of translation. The depressions appear to skirt round these areas of high pressure, and not to advance into them.

The simplest idea that can be given of the general motion of these areas of depression is that they follow each other in the main stream of air, which sweeps round the permanent area of low pressure near Iceland, much in the same way as eddies in a running stream.

Easterly gales are, on the whole, difficult for us to foresee; they come on us with little warning; and this is not solely attributable to the deficiency of information from Eastern Europe, for, since we have received warnings from that region, we have hardly had an instance of a warning which preceded the gale. In most instances the easterly storm was on the north side of a depression travelling eastwards, and began first at our western stations. Such was the storm of Sunday, Feb. 2, which set in as an east gale at Pembroke, and subsequently extended to stations lying to the eastward. Some of these easterly storms do apparently advance from the eastward, and to this class belongs the fearful storm of Nov. 12-13, in the Baltic. The ravages of this storm were mainly caused by the fact that a continuance of westerly winds had dammed back the water at the Skager Rack, and then, when

the wind chopped round to east, the narrow channels between the Danish Islands could not discharge the water quickly enough. The unavoidable result was an inundation.

What are now the signs of a storm, and when do we issue warnings? We are perforce driven to use the barometer mainly, as it is an instrument more closely related to the direction and force of the wind than the thermometer, and one whose daily range is trifling. As we have seen already, if we trust it alone we shall hardly ever be certain about a storm, and the thermometer will not help us much. We have, then, other signs, such as shifts in the direction of the wind, an increase of sea, and all the manifold local indications in the atmosphere given by the character of the clouds and the transparency, &c., of the air, which are invaluable as collateral information, but require a practised eye to discern them.

If it were possible to place our office, with its present telegraphic facilities, on the west coast of Ireland, we might fairly hope to foretell five-sixths of the storms which strike us. On two separate occasions Mr. Scott was in the district in question, and knew perfectly well from the look of the sky that a storm was coming, some hours before the barometer began to fall, and consequently long before the office here could issue warnings.

In conclusion, we add a few words as to the degree to which we are practically able to foretell storms, and of the results of our storm-warning messages. It may seem a comparatively simple matter to say whether or not a warning was issued in time or not; but it is really not so easy a matter, as storms are exceedingly local, so that two observers situated close to each other may differ seriously as to whether there has been a gale or not.

We have endeavoured, by the best means in our power, to keep a check on the correctness of our warnings for the last three years; that is, on whether or not we have been able to give intelligence of the gales in time to be of practical service to seamen. The result has been, for the years 1870-71, that 46 per cent. of our warnings have been followed by gales, and about 20 per cent. in addition have been justified by the occurrence of strong winds after they were hoisted, showing a total percentage of successful warnings of nearly 70 per cent. For the first six months of

1872 the per centage of gales for which warnings were issued in time has risen above 60, and the total per centage of successes to nearly 80, owing to the two independent circumstances that the postal telegraphic arrangements have gradually become more perfect, and that the exchange of information with the Continent has become more regular since peace has been re-established.

THE CARNAVAL AT BRUSSELS.

THE life and enjoyment of Brussels commenced on Tuesday, 25th February, the gaiety and pleasure to which the peaceable and tranquil population of this elegant little city had been looking forward to long before its arrival.

So bad was the weather, that, until a late hour of the afternoon, the ordinary traffic was alone perceptible: a shrug of the shoulders, and "*Bien regrettable, monsieur,*" became the frequent accompaniment to a friendly recognition.

However, "*le jeu*" will out, and at length groups of little gamins, heralding the feast before the fast—dressed in all colours, with the most wonderful masks, forming a procession whose dignity was only equalled by their noise—became more frequent in the narrow streets, and created the first impressions of amusement and coming festivity to the passers-by.

For some weeks past, placards innumerable have been everywhere conspicuous. Out of the many, headed "*Grand Bal Paré, Masqué, ou Travesti,*" one was puzzled to know which to select; as not only at the theatres are balls given, but societies, public and private, besides various companies and brotherhoods, all announce their entertainments, at prices varying from seventy-five centimes to fifteen francs.

No national fête can be thoroughly appreciated without an insight into the *modus operandi* of all classes; so I determined to apportion the three days of the Carnival—Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday—to diversions of the lower, the middle, and the upper divisions of society respectively.

Choosing one of the former entertainments, whose patrons consisted of the paysan class, I paid my one franc, and entered a not very large room, generally used for musical and theatrical entertainments. The crowd was here so great that it seemed advisable to seek refuge in the

balcony, and regard the grotesque sight with some degree of personal comfort.

The scene below was certainly as curious as amusing. The queens of the occasion, with pretty costumes, fantasies in all colours—from the brilliant short red dresses and blue jackets of the Normandy peasant, completed with the towering white head-dress, looking very jaunty, and certainly displaying universal taste in colour and arrangement, to those who, with more singular choice, chose the disguise of entire black, including head and face; whilst others, with less pretension, but by far fewer in number, merely added a small domino to their improvised evening attire. So much for the ladies. It must be said that beauty of features was wanting; but in some measure this was compensated for by taste, graceful comportment, and, not the least, by the neat way in which the small, pretty feet were made to look more attractive by the elegant manner in which they were chaussés, in which detail alone a pattern might be respectfully presented to the far more lovely belles of our own country. The knights of the evening certainly added the element of most outrageous, laughable absurdity to the graceful and attractive part of the entertainment. As the "get up" of their fair partners was evidently intended for additional attractiveness, so that of the men was certainly intended for the exact opposite. The most popular disguise appeared to be masks of the most hideous appearance; huge noses, projecting far in advance, mouths imitated by enormous jaws, and perukes of long curls; costumes of warriors in paper armour, brilliant jackets of every gaudy colour. Whilst some assumed the guise of elderly matrons, with deportment to match, others combined the female attire, with perhaps a huge helmet or bushy Grenadier bonnet. All were curious and ridiculous. The dancing was certainly the *sine quâ non* of the evening—the joy of the company, the soul of the festivity, in which all were enthusiastic. And here one is struck how greatly the tastes and popular delights vary in different countries. It seems difficult to understand where or how the wonderful steps, the gymnastic movements, and the graceful bends could have been acquired; for certainly, unless explained by an inherent facility most Continental nations possess to gesticulate with precision to certain sounds, an enormous amount of time and training must have been

necessary to perform in the accomplished style demanded by these devotees to the dance.

The quadrille was evidently the chosen delight here. The figures bring in all the varied accomplishments of the performers. The whirl of motion is so bewildering, that it is difficult to conceive how the music succeeds in controlling the several devices; but it is when some more striking bars occur that the turns, jumps, and boot elevations become more wild and extravagant. The sight was certainly novel and amusing. Of the fast dances, curious to say, the slow, insipid polka or the constrained varsovienne appears more popular than our hurrying waltz or rapid galop. These latter do not apparently afford that opportunity for fantastic display so much sought after. The deportment of the company was characterized by polite, genteel manners—no unruly noise or offensive jesting; but every one seemed to please and amuse in the most pleasant, agreeable, and friendly manner. All were on good terms, and universal gaiety and merriment were the order of the evening. A room was devoted to refreshments, where the gallant conducted his partner of the dance, and regaled themselves with light wines, lemonade, and the mildest of beer; which liquors, to the welfare of the country, appeared to refresh and satisfy, and certainly without creating a tendency to stupidity or riot, which our more potent beverages unfortunately too soon succeed in doing at popular fêtes or meetings.

Time limits pleasure, so about four o'clock a.m. a galop announced the termination of the first day of the Carnaval. Some masks were laid aside, trophies of costume exchanged, the gas lowered, and an orderly separation finished this part of the night's entertainment.

Proceeding to the central part of the town, one soon perceived that festivity had by no means finished; for the fact was, the principal restaurants announced that they would be open for suppers throughout the nights of the Carnaval. Entering one of the largest, a new phase of the day's life commenced. With the crowd of people inside the salon, it was a matter of difficulty to secure a place. Seated at length, the scene in every part of the large room was lively and entertaining in the extreme. The most brilliant colours, the prettiest of dresses, the most curious of coiffures, distinguished the fair sex; whilst

few men were to be seen who were not in some disguise. Such noise, laughing, talking, badinage, singing, haranguing, together with the clatter of plates, glasses, knives and forks, with the perpetual cry of "Garçon" piercing the general hubbub, made a scene complete for a fairy tale depicting a Hall of Pleasure, or a festival in an Arabian Nights' Entertainment.

The wonder that struck an observer most was how so many different costumes could have been devised, or what fantastic imaginations could have conceived the wonderful male attires, each rivalling the other to the utmost bounds of travesty's grotesque licence. At one table, forming a group enjoying a morning supper, were united in happy family, the Pierrot, in white loose gown and continuations of the Clown, seated by a knight of some age when mantles, gilets, pantaloons, and stockings of blue, pink, and white must have been in vogue. Facing the gallants, a young lady, powdered hair, domino, gold embroidered jacket, with short silk jupons, and the neatest blue bot-tines, with the long heels and many buttons, was in company with the high white cap, red body, and striped, short dress of the tasteful peasant belle. Amongst the party appeared a burgomaster in Court dress, and a monsieur in the costume of an ouvrier—blue blouse and short, square hat—doing the honours of the table to a charming demoiselle in a black evening dress, as generally worn by gentlemen. Such varied groups repeated themselves at each of the tables which filled the large salon—each a combination of colours and variety fit for the study of a stage manager.

At frequent intervals some little excitement would attract the common interest; as when some coquettish little beauty, bewitchingly attired, would proudly make her way down the room, receiving a round of applause, as the gentlemen would rise on either side, and, with extended arms, form a triumphal arch for the little queen. The sparkling eye, happy smile, and gay little salutations, as she returned the homage by placing the smallest of hands before the most rosy mouth and pearly white teeth, bespoke the most intense delight her vanity could covet, or, apparently, her existence could demand.

Another time all would rise to a round of vivas, as a masquée entered the salon, wearing a small Belgian coloured flag

surmounting her head-dress, a salute returned by a pretty rire aux dents blanches. Or, again, groans would greet a Clown, with his loose white linen, and pitifully foolish expression, making his exit from the scene. Between such causes for merriment would often be repeated some air from "*La Fille de Madame Angot*," an opera bouffe performing here, all joining in the popular chorus to produce a good musical effect.

Such is but a short account of universal gaiety, swelling to proportions unattainable amongst our stoic race. Volumes would be required to trace the several items—each a character and picture combined—making a combination rivalling an imaginary representation of Fairyland.

Very singular, and not the least worthy of mention, is it that, throughout the festivities, I observed no display of ill-feeling or disturbance to ruffle the scene. The fact that a policeman was, perhaps, the least frequent spectacle in the Carnaval speaks much for the orderly character, gentle deportment, and inoffensive manners of the gay and quiet Belgian. Venturing to remark the observable absence of the officers of the peace, a native promptly enlightened me by—

"Mais, mon chère, mais nous sommes tous de la police."

Quitting the scene, I found myself in the full daylight of a magnificent day, the sunlight already soft and brilliant: in fact, time had hurried on until, a clock informed me, six a.m. had arrived. But still parties were entering and leaving the various restaurants which abound in every direction. The streets were crowded: all seemed alive, as if a morning masquerade were commencing. It was curious, making one's way to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, to pass the country-women bringing in their shining brass cans of milk and vegetables in little carts, drawn by sagacious, good-natured dogs, who seemed rather proud than injured by their useful employment. In the market-place the produce of fields and gardens was arranged in long rows on the ground for sale; and droll was it to perceive a figure in grotesque dress bartering for some small purchase of fruit or dainty vegetables with the much-amused Flemish dame. So Mardi Gras had finished, and Mercredi des Cendres had commenced—a day of rest and repentance before the morrow arrived to announce the second day of the festival.

At about seven o'clock the restaurants, estaminets, and divans began to fill, and at eight were in their full glory. Here the harlequinade could be most thoroughly studied. The greatest outbursts took place when some masqué, in woman's attire or other disguise, speaking in a most discordant voice meant to resemble that of the fairer sex, but with intermittent breakdowns, which made the counterfeit the more ridiculous, would pass between the avenues of the community, and harangue those of whom he had the slightest knowledge in the most remorseless manner, exposing the affairs or doings of the unfortunate object of badinage, to the great delight of the company, and to the extreme testing of the injured victim's temper. The strain on the vocal, loquacious, and even mental powers of those who levelled their jest and satire for hours together must have been extreme. Enthusiasm alone could have sustained them in acting a most fatiguing and arduous part, which, however, if well performed, was generally greeted with applause. Other devotees to the licence of the Carnival would content themselves by visiting in groups the assemblies, passing from café to café, and displaying their costumes for the good of public merriment.

A yet higher species of entertainment was undertaken by bands of university students, who, acting as gymnasts, would perform on chairs and tables their feats, and then announce a contribution to the spectators for "les pauvres." The sums realized were stated in the next day's papers, some amounting to a very praiseworthy donation.

The attraction which strongly suggested itself for the next night was a "Bal Paré, Masqué, ou Travesti," at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra, a magnificent building, ranking next to the Théâtre de l'Opéra in size and elegance. The entertainment was the chosen one for the middle classes, and comprised an assemblage of nearly 3,000 patrons diffused over the area, tiers of boxes, and balcony of the profusely gilded and richly decorated interior. The parterre and parquet, or arena, was boarded over and appropriated to the dance, which was set in motion by a fine orchestra of about eighty performers. Looking from above, the arena appeared a confused conglomeration of moving pieces of colour. Directing one's attention to a single couple, an interesting study of fantasie presented itself. Here might be seen the tall figure of a man, disguised in elegant silk

and walking attire of a matronly individual, accepting the arm of an apparently little man in evening dress, whose tall hat, peculiarly poised on a summit of distorted hair, unmistakably betrayed the farce of the conception. The modest, retiring gait of the dame, and the bold gait of the cavalier, as they passed about, were even more successfully assumed than the attire.

Other figures, partners in a dance, were entirely shrouded in flowing black mantles, so similar, that probably all at intervals mistook their partners.

The occasional white covering of the Pierrot could be seen conspicuous in the crowd, with male figures more complex in peculiarity, as the soldier of Louis XVI., with cuirass, leather breeches, finished by a nightcap; or the humble farmer, with mask of idiotic simplicity, surmounted by the most warlike helmet of Hector-like design, and combinations as grotesque in endless variety.

In the elegant seats and neat boxes of the first circle, the toilettes, contrasting with the crimson velvet drapery, became more conspicuous, as the occupants reposed themselves from the crowd, or partook of dainty refreshments on the small table with which each box was provided, these extending round the house immediately behind and overlooking the balcony seats.

To name the characters assumed by the fair sex would require a novel vocabulary. Some were recognisable as Arlequinette, Matelot Grec, Hermès, Soubrette François Premier, Tyrolienne, Fantaisie Villageoise, and the attire designated "Ne m'oubliez pas," one certainly devised to enforce the request.

Each fair travestie was complete in taste of colour, style, and deportment. The beauty of English features, regularity of profile, and elegance of figure, were alone wanting to attain the ever ideal notion of perfection.

The effect of the ball culminated in the quadrille, for which the dancers arranged themselves in long rows the entire depth of the building. When the music commenced, universal motion seemed to possess all, as, with steps and attitudes varied as the dresses, the opposite rows performed to each other; this—varied by rapid whirls, marvellous agility of leg performance, and an acrobatic display of limb gesticulation—ap-

peared to constitute the summum bonum of the dance.

The fast dances were certainly more sober affairs, as polkas, mazurkas, and varsoviennes appeared introduced as quietas and periods of comparative sober repose, for conversational enjoyment.

The ball concluded about four a.m. by a quadrille, danced by students, under the leadership of one of their number—a Hercules of size and strength, with an immense Grenadier bearskin, jack-boots, and high-waisted cotton dress, belonging probably to some portly dame; certainly, for size and droll appearance, the most noticeable character in the room. The performance of this party was loudly applauded, as their fatiguing physical exertions announced the finale of the second day's fête.

Sunday, the 2nd instant, the last of the Carnival, was the third repetition of the festival, only distinguishable, if possible, by greater street crowds and more apparent excitement.

The splendid house of the Royal Opera was again devoted to the dance. The scene, in comparison with the last described entertainment, was singularly triste; for the upper ten who frequented the entertainment made their appearance attired chiefly in entire black, with dominoes, and occupied the boxes to witness the scene. The fancy dresses of the proportionately few dancers were not sufficient to counteract the gloomy appearance of the mass of black, contrasting strangely with the dazzling play of colour which the Bal de l'Alhambra exhibited. And so the Carnival of 1873 ended—the most secular diversions clashing and intermingling with the most austere of religious observances.

MY FIRST BURLESQUE.

AN affection for the drama has always been a special weakness with me from my childhood upwards. One of the earliest red-letter days of my existence was that on which I witnessed, at the house of a juvenile friend, the performance on a miniature stage of the exciting melodrama, "The Miller and his Men." From that day forward did I yearn to take upon myself the cares and responsibilities of management, and become the proprietor of a wooden playhouse and a pasteboard company. This, the dearest wish of my heart, was ere long gratified, my

parents yielding to my solicitations, and presenting me with the much-coveted treasure on a well-remembered anniversary of my birthday. Never shall I forget the torture of expectation and the pangs of hope deferred I experienced from the fact that the happy day unluckily fell on a Sunday; and my mother, therefore, after I had taken one short survey of my property, very properly consigned it to a cupboard until the next morning.

The stock piece of all Lilliputian playhouses is, or used to be in those days, the aforesaid "Miller and his Men;" and this was for some time the only specimen of the drama I was able to submit to the discriminating audiences—consisting generally of my grandmother, who lived with us, a younger brother, a juvenile friend, and a favoured domestic—who honoured my theatre with their patronage. One day, however, the necessarily long run enjoyed by the millers was interrupted by an appreciative uncle contributing the scenery, dramatis personæ, &c., of a play of a very bellicose character, entitled "The Battle of Waterloo." The value of the gift was very much lessened, in my eyes, by the stipulation that my younger brother—who had never previously been permitted behind the scenes—was to be joint-proprietor of it with myself. My fears as to the impolicy of this arrangement were shortly realized. At the conclusion of the first representation of the conflict on the dramatic boards, a difference, which terminated in a pitched battle on the parlour boards, occurred between my brother and myself in reference to the quantity of ammunition expended at Waterloo, the expense of which was defrayed between us. In the course of the *mêlée* Blucher was torn completely in half, Bonaparte lost his head, and the Iron Duke was very much damaged. In the interests of peace and concord, and in order to play first and only fiddle in the concern, I bought my brother's interest in it for the—
to me at that time—large sum of fourpence halfpenny. I regret to say he immediately expended his entire capital in toffy and bull's-eyes, and having consumed the whole at one sitting, and made himself ill in consequence, petitioned his parents for restitution of his proprietary rights. The result was, to my thinking, a miscarriage of justice; for I got reprimanded for supplying the means wherewith my brother upset

himself, and he was reinstated into the full enjoyment of the "Waterloo" property.

The too common fate of all theatres overtook mine, and it happened in this wise:—"The Miller and his Men" terminates very brilliantly with the blowing-up of the mill and the majority of the performers. One night, my audience being rather larger than usual, I ventured upon some fiery effects to finish with, more than ordinarily startling. Alas! it ended in Grindoff, the very heavy villain, getting more retributive justice meted out to him than the dramatist contemplated, for he was not only blown up, but actually set on fire. Ere I could remove him from the stage, the blaze was communicated to a side-wing, and "the fire spreading with marvellous rapidity, the whole building was soon one mass of flame." My grandmother fainted, my brother screamed for help, the domestic ran for water; but my mother, with more presence of mind than all the rest, seized the hearth-rug, and speedily enveloped the entire edifice in it, crashing the timbers as she did so. The table-cloth and hearth-rug were damaged, the theatre was a perfect wreck. All performances were thenceforth tabooed at home, and the drama suffered a heavy blow and great discouragement.

My adoration of the dramatic muse was, after the tragic circumstance related, in a quiescent state for some time; but it slumbered only till an opportunity was presented for its further display. The opportunity came. In due course I was sent to Dr. Blencoe's boarding academy, and while there I organized, in conjunction with a few kindred spirits, a grand performance of "Macbeth" in an outhouse. As, however, every member of the audience—which was composed entirely of schoolfellows—was provided with a pea-shooter, and opened fire upon each actor with a volley of peas as soon as he opened his mouth, it could not be said that the work of the immortal bard was represented under the most advantageous circumstances. Neither could it be considered a success in a pecuniary point of view. We charged one penny for admission; but at the conclusion of the tragedy—it was a considerably abridged version, by the way—the spectators demanded their money back, on the ground that the performance was not worth it, and, as violent measures were threatened if the demand were not complied with, we unwill-

ingly disgorged. But even such reverses as these were insufficient to effectually damp the ardour of so devoted an adherent to the drama as myself.

As my parents determined, with my concurrence, that I should devote myself to the legal profession, after leaving school I was installed as an articled clerk at Messrs. Tape and Deedes', an old-established firm of solicitors in my native town, Darborough. Here I became acquainted with Timpkins, a fellow-clerk with tastes congenial to my own, who took an early opportunity of getting me elected a member of the Darborough Thespians, a society composed of young townsmen occupying a similar position in life to myself. I took part in several public performances given by the society, with much satisfaction to all concerned, and myself in particular, my efforts being attended with so much success that I speedily attained to the position of leading light comedian to the company. I distinguished myself also by writing an opening address, and by adapting one or two light pieces from the French specially for our performances. The daring idea then occurred to me—Why shouldn't I write a play myself? What a delicious sensation it would be to see one's own plot unravelled, to hear one's own lines applauded by an appreciative audience, and perhaps—oh, unspeakable happiness if it should come to pass!—to be summoned before the curtain to receive the congratulations of the aforesaid appreciative audience. The prospect was too tempting to be lightly abandoned. I thought over it, slept over it, dreamed over it, and finally determined "to do or die."

I chose burlesque as the medium for displaying my play-constructing powers, comedy being more in my way than tragedy, while the D. T.s were, I knew, burning to distinguish themselves in that class of entertainment. It also occurred to me that, as I was a 'prentice hand, it might be wiser to boldly term what I wrote a burlesque, than to attempt something else which other people might designate by that title at the expense of my feelings. Now came the hunt for a plot. I ransacked the classics to begin with, coached up Homer (translations) till I had all the squabbles of the Greek heroes at my fingers' ends, and had learnt a precious deal more about the adventures of the vagrant Ulysses than ever old Blenkoe could drum into my obstinate cranium, with all his lick-

ings to help him. Then I dived into the *History of England*; and having crammed as much into myself as would have sufficed, I verily believe, to pull me through any competitive examination going, I pitched upon the reign of the ever-glorious daughter of bluff King Hal as the mine to be worked.

Out of the materials I had collected, and my own imagination, I managed somehow to hew out a tolerably intelligible story, and then set to work to devise effective situations, provide words for the popular melodies, operatic and otherwise, of the day, contrive openings for breakdowns, walk-rounds, &c., and wrench jokes out of the Queen's English by distorting and twisting it—as is the manner of burlesquers—till it was hardly recognizable. When I slept, I was haunted by the phantoms of words I had grievously ill-used during the day, and generally woke with my brain in a perfect ferment, after frantic efforts to give birth to impracticable puns and impossible rhymes.

At length I gave the last finishing touch to my bantling, after reducing its proportions to about a third—beginners usually overdo it in the matter of quantity—and decided to entitle it "*Good Queen Bess*; or, the English *Sovereign* and the Spanish *Crown*." I submitted it, in fear and trembling, to the D. T.s, who were graciously pleased to flatteringly approve it, and to agree by an overwhelming majority to produce it; and I finally found my hopes of actually seeing it on the stage in a fair way of being realized.

I undertook the entire responsibility of the "getting up" of the piece, which was to be "produced under the immediate superintendence of the author;" and, as author and manager combined, I had a pretty considerable taste of the worries and anxieties of rehearsal. There was Dobson—a most sensible fellow, too, generally speaking—who was quite surprised I hadn't managed him a solo: he had a voice like a raven's, by the bye. Golightly, who was cast for the heroine, thought the part really so insignificant that it wouldn't be worth the trouble of dressing for, if I didn't write it up. Wiggles couldn't see at all why Robinson should speak the tag, when it would be much more in character for him to do it; and Johnson regarded it as the height of unfriendliness because I hadn't provided him with a double-shuffle all to himself. Then Simpson, the tenor—and a very good one, too—who had more singing

to do than anybody else, must needs, a week before the performance, go skating on a piece of ice that would barely support a cat. He went in, of course, and cold, sore-throat, &c., followed, so that he was perfectly certain he shouldn't be able to sing a note. However, by dint of hot water, hot gruel, hot flannels, and hot bottles, we got him sufficiently round by the time he was wanted.

These were a few of the difficulties with which I had to cope; but after a course of drilling and coaching of the members, individually and collectively, which nearly knocked me up altogether, everything bade fair to go pretty smoothly as the eventful night arrived.

There was no regular theatre at Darborough, so we used to get a builder to fit up a stage in the Town Hall, which was a large and handsome room, and hire proscenium, scenery, &c., from London. Our company, having been established for some years, was looked upon as rather a crack one, and we could be sure at all times of a good house, more especially as we always devoted our profits to some popular charity. On this occasion the County Hospital was to be the recipient of our balance; and the announcement of a new and original extravaganza—I thought extravaganza would look more imposing on the bill than burlesque—written by a D. T., stimulated the desire to be present. I was too modest to allow my name to appear, although it was morally certain there weren't half a dozen persons in the house who couldn't name the author.

We opened the ball with a three-act dress comedy; and when the curtain rose the house was crowded in every part by an audience {"composed," as the local paper said, "of the élite of the town and neighbourhood."} The comedy, although very fairly played, was received quietly by the audience, who seemed too much afraid of splitting their kid gloves to applaud, which did not tend to render me particularly confident of the success of my own production.

Spiffkins, the leader of our orchestra, had arranged an overture to the burlesque, introducing in it the principal airs in the latter; and immediately on its conclusion up went the curtain. Being reckoned somewhat accomplished, for an amateur, in the art of stage dancing, I had yielded to solicitation at the last moment, and undertaken

the part of an active courtier, who only came on in the opening of the piece, in order that I might lead in a walk-round, which we had taken considerable pains to bring to perfection. I was soon gratified by finding that the puns—good, bad, and indifferent—in most instances hit their mark; whilst the audience were fairly thawed by the walk-round, which was vociferously redemanded. Of course we repeated it; and at its conclusion I made my final exit. But, as ill-luck would have it, in the bustle and excitement I went off at the wrong side of the stage. It would not have signified particularly, had not the scene extended to the very back of the room, and consequently there were no possible means of getting to the opposite side, except by crossing in sight of the audience. This would never do, as it would interfere with the action of the piece. I might have waited till the next scene was down, when I could have passed behind it; but the scene then proceeding was a long one, and I was anxious to get to the dressing-room on the other side, to exchange my present costume for the conventional evening suit, so as to appear in proper trim if the author *should* be called before the curtain to respond to the compliment. As this was the honour of all others that I coveted, my anxiety not to lose it by any accident can be understood.

A happy thought—at least it appeared so—flashed across me. As I could not go *over* the stage, why shouldn't I go *under* it? I knew to my cost, as I had nearly dislocated my ankle through it, that there was a space at one corner left between the wall of the room and the boards forming the temporary stage. By squeezing myself through it, I might grope my way across and come up at the other side, where I hoped to find a similar opening, or, failing that, I could but return. After some difficulty, I managed to let myself down—though not without bruising my ribs, tearing my doublet and trunks, and losing my wig—and commenced my wanderings below, amidst a forest of timbers, &c. I was forced to feel my way on my hands and knees, and had not made much progress on my journey before my forehead came into violent contact with one of the supports. As, with the exception of an occasional gleam of gaslight visible between the interstices of the planks, all was darkness, I repeated this bumping performance

again and again, receiving the punishment on all sides of my unfortunate skull. The monotony of this frequently recurring proceeding was varied by my coming into collision with and overturning a large pot of paint, which had been left by one of the workmen. Sprawling over it, I got well besmeared with the creamy compound, and must have presented very much the appearance of a considerably over-painted African chief in a Tudor suit. The atmosphere was hot and stifling in the extreme—the room itself being crowded and ill-ventilated, and the footlights close adjacent to me; and with excitement and my recent exertions combined, I was in a perfect vapour bath. Nevertheless, I persevered, supported by the, to me, great issues at stake, and had reached what I judged to be the centre of the stage, when I heard a sharp click, a sudden pain shot through me, and, to my indescribable horror, my right hand, which I had rested on I knew not what, was seized as if in a vice. I attempted in vain to drag it away from the iron grasp detaining it, and at last summoned courage to feel with my other hand to ascertain if possible the nature of the dreadful creature in whose power I was. I soon discovered I was caught in a gigantic rat-trap, which, with feelings better imagined than described, I found was securely fastened to one of the supports. The pain was intense, whilst all my efforts to free myself with my disengaged hand were useless.

All this time my burlesque was proceeding overhead, every word of it being distinctly audible to me. It was going gloriously; and here was the author of it lying ignominiously caught in a rat-trap! The situation would have been ludicrous enough had it not been intensely painful. I heard every note of Timpkins's solo,—and uncommonly well he sang it!—and yet how earnestly did I pray that it wouldn't be encored—my torture being thereby prolonged; though but a short time ago I would have shouted until I was hoarse to that end. But it was, and Timpkins—what maledictions I called down upon him!—went right through it again from the beginning. How every step of Brownlow's hornpipe thudded, as it were, on my excited brain. I knew B.'s Terpsichorean abilities too well to hope for an instant that the audience would be denied a repetition of it; and though I could distinctly hear him puffing, and blowing, and

gasping for breath, the love of kudos sustained him, and once more did his nimble footsteps tread the rapid measure. Then how long—how very long did they prolong the broadsword combat to melodramatic fiddling in the third scene! Would Timpkins never run him through, I thought.

Oh, if I only dared shout "Help!"—and I must certainly have done so had I not been perfectly sure that it would have produced a panic, with probably all its fearful results, among the audience, who would at once have jumped at the conclusion that the place was on fire. My play, too, was at stake—the work of weeks would have been ruined. And then what a state I was in, to be hauled out and gazed at by everybody, bedaubed with paint, begrimed with dust, with a bruise nearly as big as an egg on my forehead, in a motley garb soiled and torn, dishevelled as to my locks, and with my hand in a rat-trap. A pretty spectacle for beholders, truly! No, the piece was drawing to a conclusion, and I would bear it a little longer.

My senses seemed preternaturally acute. Faint as I was with pain, I heard, and, in my mind's eye, saw, everything transpiring on the stage. There was Johnson, stuck at the very point I told him at the dress rehearsal he would be—he never could get that line into his head. How I longed to give him the cue; but Dingle came to the rescue and filled up the pause, whilst Johnson got the word from the prompter.

The performance seemed to last for an age; but at last they came to the tag, and then the finale, consisting of a chorus and dance by the whole strength of the company. I wondered whether the property-man would remember to light the red fire, which I had been so particular to have placed in readiness—no pun intended—at the wing before I went on. Yes; its fumes, assailing my nostrils, soon convinced me he had not forgotten it. Now, the orchestra was playing with might and main, and all the company were hard at it, dancing away as if for dear life. Every board seemed to rise and fall and creak under their united tread, thumping at my head as if ten thousand demons were holding a Terpsichorean orgie above me. Cheers, clapping of hands, and shouts of "Encore, encore!" filled the air as the curtain descended. A perfect Babel of voices, and up went the curtain again, and once more those horrible demons performed their

infernal can-can. Oh, mercy, when would they cease! And then my head began to swim as shouts of "Author, author!" resounded in my ears, and I heard footsteps run from side to side, and Timpkins calling, "Where is he?" I heard no more—exhausted nature could hold out no longer, and, giving one long pent-up cry of agony, I fainted.

When I came to myself, I was lying on the stage, surrounded by the whole of the company, my head supported by Timpkins, who was bathing my forehead and trying to pour brandy down my throat at the same time; my neck bared, and the hideous instrument of torture which had caused me so much suffering lying at my side. A medical man, one of the audience, was bending over me, and after I had taken a pull at the flask, pronounced that I should soon be all right. My hand, which was bleeding and cut to the bone, was next attended to and scientifically bound up; but the marks of some of those terrible iron teeth are visible at this very moment.

It appeared that my compatriots were too much absorbed in the performance to miss me until I was called for, when, as every one was hunting to congratulate me and push me before the curtain, my cry gave them information as to my whereabouts. Immediately all hands were at work pulling up the centre of the stage, and I was discovered. Dobson, the prompter, remembered seeing me disappear under the boards; but somebody requiring a prompt at the moment, my unaccountable movement went out of his head, and he only thought of it again when I was wanting. The trap had been placed where I had unfortunately lighted upon it, by one of the carpenters, who thirsted for vengeance on a rat that, in his absence, had eaten a portion of his dinner a few days before.

But "all's well that ends well," and "Good Queen Bess" was considered so successful that a second performance of it was given shortly after, when the audience, to make amends for my previous disappointment, bestowed upon me the honour I so longed for, and summoned me before the curtain, "to receive," in journalistic phraseology, "an ovation."

The Darborough Thespians have ceased to exist—at least as a society. Timpkins has taken unto himself a wife, and rejoices in a son and heir, to whom I have often

confided my fragment of theatrical experience. The remainder of the members are scattered about in various parts of the habitable globe; and if any one of them should chance to read this, I will be bound he has not forgotten the incident related, and will bear testimony to the truth of it in all its essential particulars. For my own part, I can safely avow that, though I may live to the age of Methuselah, I shall never cease to remember the eventful night that witnessed the production of my first burlesque.

NO ROSE WITHOUT A THORN.

ONE fond heart, and only one,
One bright smile ere work's begun,
One sweet welcome when 'tis done,
And I'm weary;—
One fond heart to cheer my life,
When I weary of the strife,
Have I in my little wife—
Bonny Mary.

But my rose conceals a thorn,
Paining ever, night and morn;
And our life of bliss is shorn
By another.
Day and night upon our hearts
Sits a shadow, and imparts
Misery, in fits and starts:
Mary's mother.

WALTER SEDWIN.

TABLE TALK.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK is not alone in desiring to preserve the stone monuments of England from the hands of the spoilers. But a difficulty will arise out of Sir John's act if ever it becomes law. This will be to settle in every specific instance what is or is not a stone monument. Agriculturists will resist the cutting of pathways across their fields in order that visitors may gaze on the records of the Past: their cattle will not take kindly to the conversion by Act of Parliament of what, through many bovine generations, has been used as a rubbing post into a protected national monument. Clause 1 of the act says:—"A monument shall include any tumulus, barrow, cromlech, dolmen, meulin, dyke, fosse, &c." Suppose this clause infringed, and a case tried at the county assizes—what jury will be able to give a satisfactory opinion on the distinction subsisting between tumuli and barrows, or to tell what is the nature of dolmens and meulins? It seems a little doubtful whether Sir John Lubbock

will succeed in "engineering" his bill through the House.

THERE IS ANOTHER QUESTION quite as dear to us, though, as the fencing round of Abury, Stonehenge, and Maeshowe with a Parliamentary hedge. The monuments of London—stone, bronze, and compo—surely are in some sense "national," are worthy of a little attention, and are particularly in need of it. Leicester-square being now enclosed with the hoarding of an advertisement contractor, and plastered over with bills, is in a more slightly condition than it has been in for some years. Whether the celebrated equestrian statue is still there or not we are unable to say, as, if it is on its old pedestal, it is hidden from view. The spectacle of a horse with three legs only, and minus the kingly figure that for many years sat in silent majesty on its back, is taken from us. And yet history repeats itself. The statue of Stocksmarket is repeated in the statue of Leicester-square. Sir Robert Viner, Lord Mayor, being a loyal subject, erected a statue to King Charles II. in Stocksmarket, at his own expense. Formed of white marble, it stood on a neat conduit in 1675; but when, in 1735, the City council fixed on Stocksmarket for the site of a house of residence for the Lord Mayors of London, the statue was removed to make way for the Mansion House. There is a curious incident with regard to this equestrian statue. It was made for John Sobieski, King of Poland, but left on the workman's hands. To save expense and time, Sobieski of Poland was cut down into Charles of England; and, to complete the matter, a Turk, underneath the monarch's horse, was chiselled into Oliver Cromwell, as a pretty compliment to the third Stuart. They left the turban on the fellow's head, though; and so the truth was discovered. In 1779, Robert Viner, a descendant of the loyal chief magistrate, applied to the Court of Common Council to have the statue erected by his ancestor delivered to him for his private use, which was at once done. The account ends by saying, "Where the statue is now (1819) we do not know." Half a century has passed; now we hardly care to know, but wish Mr. Robert Viner's example was extensively followed, as there are many statues and monumental devices in London much more suitable for "private use" than for public ornament.

MR. HAYWOOD, Q.C., in his "Biographical and Critical Essays," new series—a critical book that is almost above criticism, and of which it would be difficult to speak too highly—gives a charming picture of the London salon of a generation back, and speaks with a tone of regret of the great extension of the world of fashion since those halcyon days. The time when the fashionable district of London was "bounded on the south by Pall Mall, on the north by Oxford-street, on the east by Regent-street, and on the west by Park-lane," has long since passed. Nor, if the Berrys lived in Curzon-street, Mayfair, now, would the lighting of the lamp over their hospitable door be a sufficiently public notice to their friends of their willingness to receive them that evening. "Sometimes a note, sometimes a word, and more often the lamp being lighted over the door, was taken as a notice to attend." But this could only have been enough when all the world lived close by. Now a new world lives north, south, and west of Hyde Park, who very likely hardly drive down Curzon-street once a fortnight. If people who were intimate at these houses have cause to regret the change that has come over London society, those who were less fortunate may rejoice at the ever-widening circle that has included them.

WHO DOES NOT FEEL some sort of interest in the Yankee autobiographer and showman, Barnum? The guileless old fellow is spreading his nets again, after the fire that burnt him out; and it is reassuring to hear from America that no holocaust, however devastating and resistless, can blot Barnum's Museum from the amusement world. The veteran showman is in the field again, and will reopen his museum, menagerie, and hippodrome, at the American Institute Rink, Third Avenue, on Monday, March 31. Since the third destruction of his museum by fire, Mr. Barnum has procured a larger collection of wild animals and curiosities than ever before; and, in addition to these attractions, three first-class circus companies will give simultaneous performances in three district rings, and in such a manner that they can all be seen at the same moment. All kinds of rare novelties have been brought from abroad, and the arrival of a pair of giraffes, a young gorilla, a rhinoceros, a horned horse, two Polar bears, a number of elands, several yaks,

three nylghaus, five ostriches, living tigers, and other wild animals are daily expected. All the wild animals taken to New Orleans before the fire have been ordered north to join the show. The exhibition of trained elephants, ostriches, camels, and goats is said to be marvellously interesting. Telegraphic communications have been sent to the mechanics of Paris and Geneva, and the most wonderful automata have been specially constructed. "Colossal as was the Great Travelling World's Fair of 1872, that of 1873," says Mr. Barnum, "will far surpass it." All his life, Mr. Barnum has been engaged in eclipsing his own doings of the day before.

CERTAIN ENGLISH CELEBRITIES having come back from America with pockets full of money, there has been a mighty stampede of lecturers, actors, and others to the States. No wonder, when we have American authority for the following state of the poll in dollars among the "stars" there:—"It is certain that in America 'star' actors and actresses are richer than in any other part of the world. Edwin Forrest is rated at a million and a half dollars, say £300,000; Charlotte Cushman, £70,000; John Owens, £80,000; Barney Williams, £50,000; and Joseph Jefferson, £60,000; and, with the exception of Mr. Forrest's, all these fortunes have been gained in the last twenty-five years." As a warning to British gentlemen about to follow in the race for the Yankee dollars, though, we quote from our authority for the above these words of wholesome caution—"The Americans are lavish in their payments for first-class talent, and no country in the world has rewarded great artists so liberally as they have such celebrities as Jenny Lind, Fanny Ellsler, Sontag, Grisi, and Nilsson; but second-rate artists are silently but certainly suffered to sink." From a less public source we learn that several third-rate Englishmen—novelists, actors, elocutionists—have found out too late the truth of this, and very much wish they had stopped at home. They are on their way back to us, sadder but wiser men.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W.C. The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 276.

April 12, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A Fable.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXXIII.



VENN, two days afterwards, brought his ward back again to the old chambers. Mary hugged and kissed her; but when Laura promised to call and see her soon, she only shook her head and said it was better not, and began to cry. And then she went back to her room again, and found it cheerless and dreary indeed.

Hartley helped Laura upstairs, and installed her in her old place, the old chair by the fire. For a while neither spoke.

"It looks like what it used to be, Lollie," he said; "but it is not. It never can be again."

"Ah, no! It never can be again. My fault, my fault."

"Never again, never again. The waters

are troubled, dear, and we shall be long in getting them clear. But think no more of the past. You are always my little girl, remember; and if you were dear to me before, Lollie, when you were but a child, you are doubly dear now, when you come back to me in your sorrow and trouble. There are to be no more lessons, and talks, and walks. I must not see you very often, and never here, because people might talk. But never doubt, my child, that I love you."

He kissed her forehead and caressed her face in his old calm way, while the tears were standing in his eyes. She dropped her face in her hands, and wept unrestrainedly.

Miss Venn appeared at this juncture. She had walked to Gray's Inn, making up her mind to be kind, but yet severe; for elopement should always be visited by coldness of manner, at least. Besides, meditation of forty-eight hours had revealed to her the cunning manner in which her brother had entrapped her into a generosity of which she half repented.

But at sight of her brother's sorrow, and the weak, wasted figure in the chair, her resolution gave way; and almost before she had got the girl well in her fat, motherly arms, she was crying over her, and kissing her, with a vehemence which did infinite credit to the family.

Hartley left them, and presently returned with the kidneys, cooked in his bed-room. Nobody could do kidneys so well as Hartley, or brew such splendid coffee. And sympathy brings its own reward in the shape of appetite.

After this, she took Lollie away with her, laid her on the sofa, and with Anne, made much of her.

I have only to add that the public appearance of Laura, and the way in which she was carried off by Miss Venn, entirely re-established her in the eyes of the Gray's Inn functionaries, and effectually drowned

the voices of those who had sneered and said evil things about her disappearance.

Hartley then went with a troubled mind to find Arthur Durnford. He knew nothing as yet of his changed fortunes, and had, indeed, only heard of Philip as a cousin of whom Arthur spoke little.

"Arthur," he said, shaking his hand, "something has happened to me."

"A great deal has happened to me," said Arthur, laughing; "but I hope your accident is not so serious as mine. It's a long story. But you shall have it."

He told all, from the very beginning.

"I gave up the fortune at once," he said, simply, "because it seemed to me clear and beyond any dispute that my father was actually married to this girl, who must have died in Europe before he married again, and when Philip was a year old. He is only two years older than myself. I might have fought the case, my lawyer said; but it would have been at the cost of publishing my father's early history, perhaps raking up old scandals—all sorts of things. This I couldn't do; and Philip, who is the most generous man alive, insisted on my having double the sum which my father had given him. You see, my father never intended him to be his heir. Of that I am quite certain. On the other hand, by his will, Philip is the heir. And the decision of the case means legitimacy to him."

"I see," said Venn—"I see. Nevertheless, I do not believe. This man who supplied the proofs—I will tell you something about him directly."

"You can tell me very little that I do not know already. That MacIntyre is a scoundrel, an unscrupulous man, bound by no laws of honour, religion, or morality, I know already—partly from his own confession."

"He sold his proofs, I suppose."

"I suppose so. I have not asked Philip what he asked or got for them."

"Tell me his address, if you know it."

"I know the street, but not the number. He is in lodgings in Keppel-street, Russell-square."

"Keppel-street. I know it. Yes—Keppel-street."

Over his face there stole a look of thankfulness, expressed by the movement of his sensitive lips. His colour rose just a little, but he was outwardly calm.

"You want to see him?"

"I think I shall probably call upon him to-day."

"But what has happened to you, Venn? I am so full of my own troubles that I am selfish, and forget yours."

"Mine are not all troubles, Arthur. My little girl has been restored to me."

Arthur did not dare say a word. He was afraid to ask the question that rose to his lips.

"Spotless, thank God, and pure. You shall learn, presently, how. But tell me first about this new-found brother of yours."

"What about him?"

"Is he, for instance, a man of honour?"

"I would stake my own upon Phil's honour."

"And truth?"

"Surely, my dear Venn, you have nothing to say or to suspect against Philip, have you?"

"And a man, you think, of generous leanings, of chivalrous feeling, of lofty sentiments, of — Well, Arthur, I am going to give you a greater shock than the loss of your fortune. Listen to me. I used to tell my child, in a thoughtless way, that I should like, above all things, to see her married to a gentleman. She, my innocent and ignorant Lollie, brought up with me and with me only, knew nothing about love, marriage, anything else that is common and practical. She and I lived among our books, and fed our minds on the words of old writers. Well—" he paused for a moment. "One night when she left me, she was insulted in the street. A gentleman came to her help. Of all this she told me. She did not tell me the rest, because he persuaded her not to—that he met her again, that he told her he loved her, and begged her to marry him. She thought it would please me. She accepted him to please me. She kept silent to please me. You think it is impossible? You do not know how I had kept the girl from knowing the world and its wickedness. The day before the marriage she told me she had a secret, and wanted to tell it me. I, though I saw her distress, blinded by my own ignorant conceit, bade her keep her secret, and refused to hear it. The next day she was privately married by a Scotch clergyman—living, Arthur, in Keppel-street."

"Heavens, Venn! Do you mean MacIntyre? It was not Philip—it could not be Philip."

"Was the man ever a Scotch clergyman?"

"Who can know? He is a mass of lies. He would say so for his own purposes, whether he was or not."

"And yet you allowed him to take your fortune from you."

"Not on his own evidence, Venn. But go on."

"The—the man who married Lollie took her to Normandy with him. Before leaving the house in Keppel-street, Lollie wrote me a note, telling all. MacIntyre promised to take it himself to Gray's Inn. *He never did.* When they got to Normandy she wrote me a long letter—I can fancy what my little girl would say to me in it;—her husband took the letter to the post. *It never came.* She waited a week, and then she wrote again. Her husband took it to the post. The second letter *never came.* Then her husband brought her back to England, put her in a small house near London, and forbade her to write to me any more. You understand so much."

"It cannot be Philip," Arthur said.

"Wait. There is more. This was in June. It is now November. For nearly five months, then, she lived there. She was absolutely alone the whole time. Her husband left her in the morning, and usually came home at night. She dined alone, sat alone, had no visitors, no companions. All the time he was, as I gather, betting on horse-racing, gambling—losing money every day. Once or twice Mr. MacIntyre came to see her. Once her husband had a large party of men in the house. Then he sent her to her own room, and they kept her awake all night, singing and laughing. My little Lollie! When I think of it all, Arthur, I feel half mad! Wait, don't speak yet—there is more. It is now ten days ago. He came home very late; he rose at mid-day; he cursed at the breakfast; and then, without a word of regret, without a word to soften the blow, he turned upon his wife, told her that he was a ruined man, that he had nothing left at all, that she must leave him, because they never had been married at all. What do you think of that man, Arthur Durnford?"

"Finish your story."

"She left him—left him with nothing but what she had when she married him. And all that night, that bitter, wretched, dismal night, with the wild wind and rain driving

in her face, the poor girl wandered, wandered in the streets. Think of it, Arthur—think of it. My little girl walked about the streets all night long, never stopped—never sat down, never ate or drank. All night long—do you know what that means? The rain beating upon her, her wet clothes clinging to her, her brain confused and troubled, stupid with suffering; while the hours went on one after the other, creeping for her, flying for us. Good God! and I in my warm bed, asleep—unthinking. My dear, my little darling! If I only had but known!"

He was standing over Arthur, as the latter sat looking at him with pained and troubled face. Venn's eyes were heavy with those tears which do not fall, and his voice was shaken as he spoke.

"There is more still, Arthur. She wandered so, where, she does not know. In the morning a woman, a humble child of Samaria, gave her a cup of coffee. I have found that giver of the cup of coffee, Arthur. Then she thinks she sat down, somewhere, just before it grew light. And then she began to wander again. From noon till noon, twenty-four hours of walking in the streets. She was to have been—she might have been, Arthur—a mother. Think of it. Then, if you like it put that way, God was good to her, and sent in her path a girl, a poor starving girl, whom I had helped two years before at Lollie's own prayer—her own prayer, mind, not any charitable act—when she was ignorant of what the girl had done, what it meant, and why her father turned her away. Mary found her wandering down the street, and took her home, fainting and weary to death—not knowing what was being done to her. Then she sent to me. Lollie has been ill, since. That was to be expected. At death's door. That, too, was to be expected. There will be no child. That, too, was to be expected.

"Now you know, Arthur, what has happened to me. Is my little girl blameless?"

"Surely, yes, Venn."

"And the man, Arthur—what is to be done with the man? I made her tell me his name, on the promise that I would not harm him. To keep that promise, it is necessary that I should not see him. But what is to be done with the man, I say? How can we make him feel what he has done? Is there any way—any way? I see none. A man whose sense of honour

is so delicate that you would exchange it for your own; who is the soul of truth, of honour, of nobility; who is—alas! alas! my friend—your brother Philip.”

Then Venn took up his hat.

“I must go now,” he said. “Shake hands, Arthur. Tell me again you think my little girl is pure and spotless.”

“Before God I think so,” said Arthur. “She is my sister.”

“Thanks, friend. You shall see her. Now I go. I am bound on a pleasanter journey than when I came here. I am going to pay a little visit. Yes, you are quite right, I am going to Keppel-street. I am going to see the Scotch clergyman.”

He put on his hat and went away.

He had not been gone half an hour before Philip himself came, radiant, happy, light-hearted. Some sinners are so. Then wise men say they live in Fools’ Paradise. Perhaps—but I do not pretend to solve these difficulties—my own idea is that when a man has done such things as ought to take away all his self-respect, there is always some of it left so long as things are not found out. You can hardly expect self-respect in a gentleman who has stood in the dock, for instance, and heard the judge pronouncing sentence upon him. But the jury, how eminently self-respectful they are! One or two even, perhaps, of these might fairly stand side by side with the criminal. So, too—but I am plagiarizing from Venn’s essay “On Being Found Out,” and as the world will perhaps get this work some day, I must stop.

Arthur looked the criminal, certainly; for he flushed scarlet, stammered, and refused to notice the hand that Philip held out.

“I have heard something, Philip.”

“It must be something desperately solemn, then,” said his brother. “Is it anything new about the—the late business of ours?”

“Nothing. It is much worse than that. Mr. Hartley Venn has been here.”

Philip had, for the moment, utterly forgotten Venn’s existence. He, too, changed colour.

“Well?”

“The rest you know, I suppose. Your wife—”

“Come, come, Arthur; be reasonable.”

“I am reasonable. I say your wife—Good heavens, sir, what makes a woman a wife? What are the laws of the country to the laws of honour, honesty, truth? Did

you not pledge your faith to her? Did you not—”

“Arthur, I will not be questioned.”

“Answer me, then, one question. You have done—you, Philip, you—you have done all that Venn has told me. Learn that your wife, my *sister-in-law*, is lying ill. She has been close to dying. You will, at least, make her your wife in the eyes of the law?”

“Oh, dear, no,” said Philip, lightly. “I do not justify myself, my dear fellow. Of course, it is all extremely wicked and improper. I am very sorry to hear about her illness. Tell Mr. Venn that no money arrangement that is at all reasonable will be objected to—that—”

“Philip, stop—I won’t hear it.”

“Won’t hear what? You were not born yesterday, I suppose, Arthur. You know that such things are done every day. We all do them.”

“We all?”

“Yes—we all. Bah! the girl will get over it in a month.

“And this man is my own brother,” said Arthur, recoiling—“is my own brother!”

Philip’s face grew cloudy. There was no longer anything in him but the animal.

“Let us have no more of this nonsense,” he said. “Tell this man Venn that he may do what he likes, and go to the devil. And as for you, Arthur—”

“Philip, you are a villain. Leave my room. Never speak to me again. Never come here. Let me never see your face any more. You have disgraced the name you bear. We have been a family of gentlemen for generations. And now you are our representative. It is shameful—it is dreadful!”

Philip left him. As he opened the door, he turned and said—

“When you apologize to me for this language, you may, perhaps, expect to see me again. Till then, never.”

It was a poor way of getting off the stage, and Philip afterwards reflected that he might have finished with at least more fire and effect if he had gone off swearing. But the best things always occur to us too late to put them into practice.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

“IT is indeed a dreadful story,” said Madeleine, when Arthur told her.

“What is to be done? Advise me, Madeleine.”

"Who can advise? Mr. Venn's plan of assuming the marriage to be legal, without asking any questions, and letting Philip alone altogether, seems the best; unless, which I very much doubt, we can bring your brother to a better frame of mind. You, of course, have done as much mischief as was possible. Men are always so violent."

"I told him he was a villain," said Arthur. "It is true. I have never read, never heard, of baser and more cold-blooded treachery."

"Let me go and see Philip," said Madeleine.

She went at once to the house at Notting-hill. It was now dismantled; for Philip had sent away everything but the furniture of the two rooms in which he lived. There was no one in the place but himself and an old woman. He had never been upstairs to the room which had been Laura's since she left him.

Madeleine found him, unshaven, in a dressing-gown, smoking a pipe, in gloomy disorder. It was in the afternoon. On the table was an empty soda-water bottle, an empty tumbler, and a brandy bottle.

Philip, surprised to see her, made some sort of apology for the general disorder, and putting aside his pipe, brushed the hair back from his forehead, and waited to hear what she would say.

She began by abusing him for living in such a mess.

"Why do you do it?" she asked. "Brandy and soda in the daytime—not dressed—rooms in the most dreadful litter. Philip, you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

He only groaned impatiently.

"Is that all you have come to see me for, Madeleine? Do not worry about the rooms and me. I've got something else to think of besides the disorder of my rooms. You shall blow up the old woman if you like. She is within hail—probably sitting with her heels under the grate and her head in the coalscuttle."

"I have a great deal more to say, Philip. First of all, do you know that I am going to be your sister? I am to marry Arthur."

"Arthur is a happy man, Madeleine. I envy him. But he always had all the luck."

"Don't call it luck, Phil. But we shall see a great deal more of you, shall we not, when we are married?"

"No—a great deal less. I have quarrelled with Arthur."

"I know, I know. But hasty words may

be recalled, and—and hasty actions may be repaired, Philip, may they not?"

"If they could be undone, it would be worth talking about. Do not beat about the bush, Madeleine. I suppose you know all about that girl, and are come here to talk to me, and pitch into me. Well, go on. I cannot help what you say."

"Indeed, I do not come to pitch into you, as you call it, at all. I can say nothing so strong as your own conscience tells you. Philip, tell me something in excuse or defence. I cannot bear to think that my own brother, my husband's brother, could do this thing in cold blood. Do tell me something."

Philip was silent for a while.

"I will tell you the exact truth, Madeleine. You may call it excuse, or defence, or anything else you like. It shall be the exact truth, mind. I would tell no other living soul. I care nothing for what the world says; but I care something for what you think."

"You cannot understand the nature of a man. You will not comprehend me when I tell you that I was devoured with love for this girl. There was nothing I could not have done—nothing, mind—to get possession of her. There came a time when I had to marry her on a certain day or not at all. I got the special licence, but forgot all about speaking to any clergyman till it was too late. Then MacIntyre pretended that he could marry us—and we were married. A fortnight ago I found myself a ruined man. Worse than ruined, for I had not money to meet my debts of honour. I was on the point of being disgraced. I was maddened by my difficulties. She understood nothing of them, never entered into my pursuits, cared nothing for my life. I was maddened by her calmness. Then I lost command of myself, and told her—what, mind, I did not know till after—that the marriage was a mock one, and—and— Well, you know the rest. That is all."

"And your love for her, Philip?"

"My love? Gone—gone a long time ago. It was never more than a passing fancy, and all this business of the last fortnight put her out of my head entirely until Arthur reminded me of her. She is gone to her friend, guardian—what is it?—a Mr. Venn, who lives in chambers, and enacts the part of the universal philanthropist. I only keep on in this house, where it is tor-

ture to me to live, in order that he may not say I ran away from him. Here I am, and here I shall stay to face him—not to excuse myself, you understand. I stoop to defend my life to you alone.”

“Philip, you are not so bad as he thinks. But I may tell you at once that he will not come. When Laura told him your name, she made him at the same time promise to do you no harm—to take no revenge on you.”

“I am not afraid of that, Madeleine.”

“No; but you need stay here no longer. She has gone for the present to live with Miss Venn. I am going to call upon her myself. I am anxious to make the acquaintance of Mrs. Durnford.”

“Mrs. Durnford!”

“I am told that she is a young lady, very beautiful, very carefully educated, most sweet-tempered and affectionate.”

“She is all that, Madeleine; but she never loved me. She was always pining after Mr. Venn. That reminds me—I told you I would give you the exact truth. I destroyed the letters that she wrote to him, without telling her. That was because I was jealous of him. I would have no man in her heart except myself. I am extremely sorry I did that, because it was an error of judgment, as well as a—”

“A wrong act, Phil, was it not?”

“It was, Madeleine—a dishonourable thing. Have I abased myself enough before you, or do you want more of the confessions of a man about town? I have lots more relating to other events in a riotous career. Would you like to hear them? By Jove! I wonder if the prodigal son ever beguiled the winter evenings, sitting round the fire, with tales of the things he had done. The name of the other son is not given in the original narrative, but I believe it was Arthur.”

“No, Philip, I want no more confessions. I want an act of reparation. See Phil,” she pleaded. “God only allows us to be happy in being good. Be good, my brother.”

“I can’t, Madeleine. I’m much too far gone.”

“Then undo the evil you have done.”

“How can that be?”

“I know you better than all the rest of them, Phil. I know that you are easily influenced, that you act without thinking, that you are quickly moved, that your heart is

not selfish. I know that you are repentant, in spite of your light words. But think of the girl, Phil.”

“I do think of her. I think of her day and night. I cannot sleep. I cannot do anything. She is always before my eyes.”

“Then marry her and take her back, if she would come.”

“She would not, Madeleine. There was a look in her eyes when she left me that told me all was over. No woman can have that expression in her face, and ever come back to love and confidence. She would never come back.”

“Then marry her, Phil. In the eyes of the law, at least, let her be your wife.”

Phil was silent.

“I love her no longer,” he said. “There can be no longer any question of love between us. But see, you shall do with me what you will, Madeleine. Ask me anything for Laura, and you shall have it. Keep my story—keep what I have told you to yourself. Do not even tell it to Arthur.”

“Philip, you promise?”

“I promise, Madeleine. Give me your hand. I swear by your hand—because there is nothing I know so sacred—that I will obey you in all things as regards Laura.”

He kissed her fingers. Over his mobile countenance there passed the old expression of nobility, as if it had come back to settle there for good.

“And Arthur?” Madeleine began.

The bright look vanished.

“Arthur has used words to me—I have used words to Arthur—which can never be forgotten. Tell him so. I desire to meet him no more. Farewell, Madeleine. Write and tell me what I am to do, and I will do it. And let us part now, never to meet again. I do not know what I shall do with my future. Make ducks and drakes of it, I suppose. But I shall be out of my path. I shall be happy enough. The slopes that lead to Avernus are broad and pleasant. You may hear us singing as we go down them—you may see us dancing. Oh, it is a pleasant life, the life I am going to lead. Good-bye, Madeleine.”

She took his hand—his face was clouded and moody; and then, grateful for the promise she had got, left him and drove back to her own house.

And the same day she, with Arthur, made a formal call upon Miss Venn. Sukey, little accustomed to visitors who came in their

own carriage, was not above being flattered.

"We are not come wholly for the pleasure of seeing you, Miss Venn," said Madeleine. "I want to make the acquaintance of my future sister-in-law, Mrs. Durnford."

"Laura?" She looked curiously at Madeleine, but it was Arthur who was blushing. "Laura? She is in her own room. Would you like to go up and see her?"

"If I might. You are too kind, dear Miss Venn. May I go up by myself, without being announced?"

Sukey took her to the door and left her.

Madeleine gently opened it.

On the sofa by the fire, wrapped in a dressing-gown, lay a fair young girl, thin, pale, wasted. Her head was lying among the pillows, and she was asleep.

Madeleine bent over her and kissed her.

She opened her eyes. She saw a tall and queenly woman in silks and sealskin, and half rose.

"Don't move, my dear," said Madeleine; "let me kiss you. I am to make your acquaintance. Shall I tell you who I am? I am Madeleine de Villeroy, and I used to know your husband when he was quite a boy. Now I am going to marry your husband's brother, and we shall be sisters. My child, you shall be made happy again. We shall all love you."

"My husband? He said—he said—"

"Forget what he said, darling—forget all that he said, and, if you can, forgive him. Now, sit up and let us talk."

She sat with her for a quarter of an hour, and then went away, promising to call again soon.

In the drawing-room there was rigid discomfort. For Sukey, the moment she came back, had seized the bull by the horns and attacked Arthur.

"You are the brother of Mr. Philip Durnford?" she began. "You are the brother of a bad man—a bad man, Mr. Arthur Durnford. Tell him not to come to this house, for I won't have him. Remember that—"

"Indeed, Miss Venn, he will not come here."

"If he does, Anne will take the tongs to him—I know she will. She did that much to a policeman in the kitchen. Tell him not to come."

"My brother and I, Miss Venn, are not on speaking terms at present."

"Indeed. I'm glad to hear it—I'm very glad to hear it."

Then they both relapsed into silence, and Sukey glared at poor Arthur, by way of conveying a lesson in virtue, till he nearly fell off the chair.

Madeleine relieved them; and, after asking Sukey's permission to come again, took away the unfortunate Arthur.

"Why didn't you ring for the sherry, miss?" asked Anne, presently coming upstairs.

"I gave it him, Anne—I gave it him well." Sukey shook her head virulently. "That was Laura's husband's brother. I told him if his precious brother came here you'd go at him—with the tongs, I said."

"So I would—so I would," said Anne.

"Sherry, indeed! They are always wanting to drink. We don't drink glasses of sherry all day. I dare say it was sherry drove the abandoned brother of his to bad courses. I hope, for that sweet girl's sake, he isn't like his brother. He doesn't look it, Anne; but you never can tell. They are all alike—waste, drink, eat, and devour. Why isn't the world peopled with nothing but women?"

"'Deed, then, miss," replied Anne, "the end of the world wouldn't be very far off."

SHE AND I.

LOVE me, love, with a love like mine,
Strong as the sun at noon;
Love me, love, with a love like thine,
Pure as the midnight moon.

Talk to me, love, with words like mine,
Bold as the rushing gale;
Talk to me, love, with words like thine,
Soft as the breeze in a vale.

Look on me, love, with a look like mine,
Free as the sun's bright beam;
Look on me, love, with a look like thine,
Sweet as a smile in a dream.

Kiss me, love, with a kiss like mine,
Brave as the north wind's power;
Kiss me, love, with a kiss like thine,
Light as the dew on a flower.

Love me, love, with a love like mine,
Lasting as wind-driven wave;
Love me, love, with a love like thine,
Stronger than death and the grave.

ARCHIBALD BALLANTYNE.

DER RHEIN UND DIE DONAU.

"THE Rhine and the Danube." Geographers, with a cold mathematical standard of mere length, put these two rivers in the reverse order. Following the

same law, they rank both after the tame, stupid Volga. Ask almost any Englishman—ask any North German, and many Austrians and Bavarians, and they will arrange the two leading rivers of Deutschland as above. The Cockney tourist is ready to talk much sham sentiment about the Rhine; and, after he has been up the railroad to Mainz and down by the American steamer, feels that, come what may, he has “done” the great river of Europe. A North German will probably go a step farther. To him the Rhine is his national deity. He is not careful to veil a certain contempt for the outer barbarians who have neither part nor lot in the stream of which he is so proud. It may well be that he grudges the Swiss and Hollanders the possession of its source and mouths. “There is but one Rhine in the world,” said to me the other day a Hanoverian gentleman, when I had ventured—not in the way of comparison—to say a word in favour of the beauty of the Hudson River, U.S. Even the South German, nurtured on the banks of the Danube, is apt to qualify its praises by a modest admission that of course it cannot compete with the Rhine. “What every one says must be right.” So run the proverbs of many lands: so does the parrot-cry of society reiterate. Myself, I have a strong natural tendency to heresy. After all, in matters of taste, the heterodoxy of one generation is generally the orthodoxy of the next. “There is nothing new under the sun,” said King Solomon. The world is a big pendulum which, the farther it swings in one direction, the farther it must, perforce, swing in the other—maugre its assertion, strongest when it is farthest from the centre, that it was very foolish to go the other way, and never means to do so again. How many years is it since one Oliver Goldsmith found nothing to admire in the land of heath, of mountain, and of flood, and soon after was enraptured with the picturesque beauties of Holland? I have just finished reading an eighteenth century book of travels, printed on very bibulous paper. The writer goes through France, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, and part of Asia Minor. Only twice does he stop to admire scenery. Only once does he find fault with anything in his own—in all other respects—symmetrical and perfect country of England, and that is with the incorrect principles of architecture displayed in its cathedrals.

Gothic style was then at a discount. What would the worthy man say if he could look over the face of the country now, after the great Gothic revival?

The moral of all this is that some day we shall discover the Rhine to be a vastly over-bepraised river, and look about for some new stream for men of taste at first to idolize and idealize, and Philistines eventually to vulgarize. This may or may not be the Danube. But if the Railway of the Future—the wonderful line which is to take you from Calais to Calcutta in four or five days—should pass by Vienna, or Pesth, or Belgrade, it may chance to give the tourist crowd a set in that direction. At present the Danube is not overwhelmed with pleasure-seekers. In those regions the British knapsack is as yet unknown. And to me it is pleasant to think that I may still for some time revisit its quiet beauties without finding myself amid a throng of loud and blaspheming Anglo-Saxons, or being annoyed by the equivocal remarks and attentions which beset my countrymen in their known summer haunts.

Why does the Rhine enjoy such a reputation? Fashion by no means necessarily goes by merit. Perhaps it does not in this case; but, deferring that question for a little, let us consider what has set the fashion. A hundred years ago people did not travel for scenery. The young man who, accompanied by his travelling tutor, made the “Grand Tour,” was one

“Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes.”

Not a very novel quotation, it is true; but one which exactly touches the peculiarity of our grandfathers’ touring—and that of most of our fathers—as distinguished from our own day. He was well enough grounded in sound Protestant principles to be duly shocked at the “manners” of the besotted Papists; and so came back, as intended—more than ever attached to, and grateful for, the inestimable benefits of Crown, Church, and Constitution.

As regards the “cities,” we will hope his mind really was improved and his taste refined by the antiquities and objects of art at which he gazed. But as to scenery, he would never have dreamed of going ten miles out of the direct high road to view Mont Blanc or the Ortler Spitz. Switzerland or Savoy called up no emotion to the traveller but a shuddering dread of wolves

and avalanches. He would have talked of the Rhine only as connected with the Seven Years' War or the Duke of Marlborough. A trim garden, in the Italian style, with a fountain, made far more impression on him than a dozen cascades (natural ones), or glaciers, or river gorges. I cannot quite make out the steps by which this past order of things merged into the new. It is only one symptom of the mighty change which has come on the world. Illustrate it by the case of poetry; put it in the form of a proportion, and we may say, Alexander Pope : Alfred Tennyson :: Tourist in 1771 : Tourist in 1871. Perhaps the growing attention to natural science had some tendency to foster a love for natural beauty. Perhaps it was that the increased facilities of travelling attracted people who had—or thought they had—some natural ability for estimating real scenery, while they lacked the acquired knowledge necessary for criticizing an art gallery. Now, for those who went to look for pretty scenery, the Rhine was just at a convenient distance. So the fashion was set; and once set, many things tendered to foster it. We had a German family on the throne; we had lately been fighting in alliance with Germans; we had been entertaining German heroes with our hospitality. So we dipped into German literature. Walter Scott had given us a little taste for diablerie; we were ripe for Sir Roland and Sir Rupert, and the Lurlei Siren and Bishop Hatto. The Germans were very glad of us: we spend plenty of money wherever we go. Some of us were not averse to a little gambling of a style which piety or prudery would have forbidden at home. Small potentates near the Rhine found their revenues notably increased by the influx of English with well-filled purses. As we taught other nations improved means of travelling, and sent navvies to make their railroads, no wonder that we taught them *where* to travel. England sets the fashion in touring as undeniably as Paris does in bonnets. French, Russians, Germans themselves, followed suit; and now you hear every language on the steamer between Bonn and Bingen, not excepting a very large infusion of Americanized English. Add to this the Alpine furore, nearly coinciding in its first stage of pronounced advancement with the appearance of the "Muscular Christianity" theory. The Rhine is a pleasant route to

Switzerland, and the Drachenfels convenient to try one's 'prentice foot upon, before the sterner essay of the Mer de Glace or Schreckhorner. And so, like a drove of sheep or a swarm of white ants, advance the British tourists, each in his fellow's steps, sure that he is doing the right thing—that the sight he admires is of all sights most admirable.

This, I conceive, is the explanation of the pilgrims of the Rhine—the 20,000 and odd British virgins, ladies'-maids and all, those modern rivals of St. Ursula, spoken of by dear old Thackeray; of their equally numerous squires, who flaunt their suits of dittos at Cologne and upwards; of the patres and matres familiarum, grayheaded British citizens and citizenesses, who crowd the steamers and feed the pensions at Rolands-eck and Bingen, who smuggle back spurious eau de Cologne and cheap cigars. Oh, well for those who like now and then to brace themselves up by escaping from an atmosphere of perfumed conventionalities and ultra-civilization—well that the world is so very large, and travelling so very easy, and that fashion runs in so few grooves! He who has learnt by sad experience what is the estimate formed *a priori* of an Englishman by foreign landlords, waiters, et id genus omne—who, without any hatred of his country, or false shame at bearing its name, has still found that it is not always pleasant to be confounded with the ruck of his countrymen, need not pick and choose his route with overmuch care. Let him eschew Paris and the roads that radiate therefrom, all French seaside and Pyrenean watering-places, the larger towns of Italy, Switzerland, and the Rhine. With these, and perhaps a few other trifling exceptions, the world is before him. The few English he will meet will probably be agreeable and well-informed. Both he and they will pass unchallenged as citizens of the world, not as a species chosen by a principle of natural selection to be both fleeced and humbugged, as the lawful game of all into whose hands they come, and to be beforehand recommended to others for the like process of fleecing and humbugging.

He who approaches the Danube in this spirit will wonder, or I am much mistaken, that any one should dare to rank it after the Rhine. Where on the river of western Germany is the town to compare in quaint, old-world character with Ratisbon? What

can be more striking, as we roll along the line to Passau, than the distant view of the Walhalla, perched high up in the bosom of hills overhanging the river banks? Already the Danube begins to lay claim to its own special character as the Forest River of Europe. You may match many, nay most, bits of the Rhine scenery, taken individually with other spots in Europe. But nowhere else have you that majestic, broad, and rapid current, with interminable woodland on either side, on which the eye rests through hundreds of miles of Danube course in Bavaria, Austria, and Hungary. I have catechised many English people as to their idea of its character. Most of them have an intuitive conception of a sluggish, reed-lined stream, through a dead-level, Dutch-like plain.

I appeal to every one who has seen any considerable portion of it whether these things be so—every one except a certain ideal John Bull, who, having travelled on business to Constantinople via Vienna, was asked what he thought of the Danube, and answered that he really had not observed it. He supposed he had passed through the Iron Gate. Yes, it was a geographical and physical necessity that he must have done; but he could not say what it was like.

Let us pass on to the fine scene a little below Passau, where the river runs between steep rocky banks—that on the left lower, but covered with trees; that on the right rising in bold heights, mantled with varied foliage, and crowned with an old ruined castle—I have unluckily forgotten its name.

For my part, dire as the heresy will seem in the eyes of German worshippers, I never could admire the Rhine castles. Each time that ever I have passed them the sensation has been the same—a positive feeling of oppression, and monotony and surfeit. Only one last straw was needed to render the whole insufferable, and the Germans have not spared it. These heroes of taste and refinement have contrived to intersperse the ancient castles with modern hotels and boarding houses, and schools for young gentlemen and ladies, and huge, ugly advertisement boards, till castle and hostelry all too evidently play into one another's hands. Surely the wicked owners of these feudal edifices live again in the persons of their degenerate descendants, now, as then, to fleece the passers-by. Pah! the whole

atmosphere is reeking with *Aufschneiderei* and *Betrügerei*. Let us away.

As for Vienna, to any one who knows that second Paris, praise is superfluous. To those who do not, there is no room for a full description. Enough to remark that nowhere in the civilized world of either hemisphere are Government officials so uniformly civil and obliging. Can any one claim this for North Germany? I trow not. Pass on to Gran. Nowhere on the Rhine—nowhere else in Europe—is the tableau to be compared with the appearance of this place, as seen from the left bank. The great, wide, majestic river, with its two sharp turns, one above and one below the town; the sheer height of the rock on which stand the Cathedral and ruined castle—the former with its mighty dome and lofty columns; the bold heights, well wooded from the town onwards. Gran, too, is the first specimen of a large and characteristic Hungarian town that the traveller sees in descending the Danube, if we except Presburg, and that is hardly a favourable example. Every one knows the old saying about the Turks: that they seem to be only encamping in Europe. To look at the houses of the Hungarians, you might say the same of the Magyar race—so small, so white, so tent-like are they. Then, who has not heard of the first view of Pesth-Buda?—the wealth, and elegance, and luxury of the great town of Hungary on one side, and the ultra-Magyar appearance of the ancient capital on the other, only relieved by the large and elegant palace and the castle whose situation is far more striking than that of the most disenchanted of all famous fortresses—Ehrenbreitstein. Who that has lingered, on a moonlit summer's night, on the quay at Pesth, and marked the outlines of Ofen, and the many-twinkling lights on the water, and the long, airy lines of the suspension bridge, and drunk in the sweet sounds of tasteful and severely correct bands of music, does not leave it with regret? Who that has wandered over Buda, noted the remains of ancient buildings and inscriptions in the wondrous Magyar tongue, recounting the deeds of many a Sigmund and Görgei and gallant defence held against the Turk, can deny that this is, historically, one of the most interesting lands in Europe—its sites, perhaps, the most deeply interesting after Marathon and Salamis? For the two great

attempts that the powers of darkness have made to roll back the civilization of Europe were the Persian invasion of Greece and the Mohammedan inroads of the middle ages. Just so far, the historic sites of Greece and the Danube basin are of surpassing interest.

But it is below Pesth that the Danube appears in his glory. Steam down the king of rivers when the water is at the highest, covering the lower part of the tree-trunks on either side. Admire the forest glades that open out so frequently—long vistas full of sheep and cattle, tended by gaunt, wild-looking, sheepskin-capped peasants. Admire still more the lovely *water avenues* that break away through the trees, and generally, after a few miles, come round again to join the main stream. Reckon up the numerous islands, all richly wooded. Then say where will you match this grand luxuriance of nature. On to Belgrade, and the castles that mark the frontier lands of Christian and Moslem. Below, the gently sloping vine-clad hills may vie with Rudesheim. Then comes the crowning scenery—the Iron Gate. It is here that the Danube challenges comparison with the Rhine, and is justified in doing so. I never heard a single person, while the steamer floats through those lovely gorges, where an almost religious silence reigns, express but one opinion—"This is much finer than the Rhine." Those who had seen both before, and hesitated at Basiasch, have become enthusiastic converts before reaching Orsova. In this solitude, two signs only—outside the steamer—witness to man's existence, one ancient, one modern: the line of telegraph poles, and the remains of Trajan's road.

It cannot be said that the country immediately below the Gate is beautiful. Only the immensity of sweep, and the back view of the Carpathians and Balkan, create a certain impression. To the new-comer, too, the towns are curious, the costume and general aspect of the people well worth study. There are certain extensive reaches of water between Lom-Palanquin and Rustchuk, calm and majestic, like inland seas, which will not soon be forgotten. We will not pursue the river beyond Rustchuk. In summer—and it is in summer that one should see the Danube—it is scarcely advisable for those who value their health to go on unnecessarily to the Delta. Let

them stop at Rustchuk, and, in spite of the croakings of some guide-books, they will have little reason to fear either fever or mosquitoes.

So much for the scenery, and its superiority in beauty and variety to that of the Rhine. For the towns, after looking at Ratisbon, Vienna, Presburg, Gran, and Pesth, it may safely be asserted that no five towns can be named, from Basle to Cologne, to vie with them in interest. There is only one character I despair of interesting in the Danube, and that is the enthusiast in Gothic architecture. After he has once entered South Germany, I cannot promise him much of pointed arches or flamboyant tracery. However, he may see Brussels, Antwerp, and Cologne on his way, and if he is inclined to linger over the clumsy semi-Romanesque churches of the Upper and Middle Rhine—always excepting Strasbourg, of course—I wish him joy of his taste, and decline to share it.

The people! But my pen refuses to move on this subject. 'Twere enough to call up the ghost of Lord Strangford, were I to plunge into the intricacies of Magyars, and Sclavs, and Serbs, and Wallacks, and Bulgarians. Since the decease of that accomplished nobleman, chaos has again settled down on us. The telegraph may flash to us the most astounding lies from Bucharest or Jassy, writers may confound again Rayahs and Rajahs, and who is to set them right? Half the people who talk glibly about the "Roumanian difficulty" know as little what are the two great elements of Roumania as they do of the subdivisions of the Mandingo negroes. I do not know how often I have been asked whether Latin—pure, classical Latin—is not the ordinary language of those regions. If Trajan could return to life, and visit the land which gave him so much employment, it is a question whether he would understand the words "*Aic se verbosche Roumanische*"—the only bit of the language, by the bye, which I can call to mind, and if I have misquoted it, I hope the erudite Roumanian scholar will forgive me.

There are still some old-fashioned people who think it incorrect to enter a country until they at least have a fair acquaintance with its language. To such I say, "Eschew the Danube assiduously, unless you have a gift of languages, like the Admirable Crichton or Cardinal Mezzofanti: German will, of course, carry you a great way; but if you

go the least out of the high road, or stop in any place below the dignity of a capital, your eyes are sure to be pained by inconceivable juxtapositions of consonants, and your ears lacerated by sounds bearing no apparent relation to any civilized language."

One amusing incident befell me on a while. I was at a certain Hungarian town. I arrived quite alone, and at the one hotel could not at first find a soul who could speak German. There was a Belgian there, settled for a time, and learning the language. This good-natured man undertook, with the aid of a "Dictionnaire Magyar-Français et Français-Magyar," to interpret and order my supper. The waiter—fat, heavy, the very counterpart of honest Diggory, in "She Stoops to Conquer"—seemed very slow of comprehension. He altogether stumbled over the word "vaj," which my Belgian friend gave as the equivalent for "beurre," assuring me that it was quite useless to speak German. Diggory went away, and inquired of a fellow-servant; and came back to say he supposed we meant "butter," with a strong German accent. I forget what his nationality proved to be; but it turned out that he knew less Magyar than my well-meaning acquaintance, M. —. Can we wonder that education is backward where there is such confusion of tongues?

A very eminent Orientalist, speaking to me of this part of the world, dismissed the people with the curt remark—"Very trashy populations—in fact, the most trashy in Europe." To me such remarks seem too sweeping. Rather, I should suppose that amid such variety of origin and history, interests and predilections, there is sure to be some good discoverable—to be discovered, perhaps, as these recondite lands become better known. Meanwhile, one thing is certain: whatever corrupting influences may be at work here, one is absent. The inhabitants of Rhineland may be better in purse for the annual influx of visitors. Probably they are not improved in character, certainly not in generosity. As for civility, but—well, perhaps that could hardly be expected, except where taught by the higher education. It is not the distinguishing Teuton virtue, least of all of a certain branch of the Teuton family. But there is no influx of visitors to tempt and corrupt the dwellers by the Danube. Few and far between are they that travel that way not on business. Few and far between they

will remain till the means of locomotion change considerably, either in speed or price. Meanwhile, those who do go that way will generally agree that it is a very charming journey. Most people will say that they found the steamers of the D. D. S. G. very comfortable. I have journeyed down in company with a well-travelled American, who preferred them to all river steamers he had ever seen, even those on the Hudson River or Mississippi. At least they are less crowded than sad experience tells me these are wont to be. If the evil day does come when they and all belonging to the noble Danube shall be polluted by the cockneyism of London and Paris—I join the two advisedly—where shall lovers of river scenery and haters of humbug betake themselves? Indeed, I know not.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—VIII.

NEXT evening, without waiting to be asked, Stevens began his promised tale, in the following words:—

Soon after I first came down to New Zealand from Victoria, I was driving a mob of some three thousand sheep from the Hurunui to my place on the Waitaki. I was much delayed on the journey by the rivers being high; and many of the ewes having lambed, I thought it best to stay at the Arowhenna for a week or ten days, in order to give them a rest, and to allow the lambs to get strong enough to travel. The weather was miserably cold and wet, and I had nothing but a very small tent, which barely held three, to sleep under; and although we managed to do with it tolerably when travelling—one of our party of four being always watching the sheep at night—it was much too small for us all to live in for ten days. Under these circumstances, I made arrangements for myself and my men to get accommodation in a large hut belonging to and occupied by some bushmen, who were working in the Arowhenna bush. Here, at least, we had shelter from the rain and wind, but at the total sacrifice of peace and quietness. The inmates of the hut consisted of myself and my three men, and the six bushmen to whom the hut belonged. These were rough, wild fellows, whose only pleasure seemed to be drinking, gambling, fighting, and swearing. Every night the same

disgusting scene was enacted—the programme being thus: As soon as they had finished supper, a pack of cards, thick with dirt, and worn round at the corners from constant use, was produced, and most of the men began to play poker. Of course, bottles of “square gin” soon put in an appearance, and those who won drank as a matter of rejoicing, whilst the losers drank to keep up their spirits, and console themselves for their bad luck. Soon the usual and certain effect took place: angry words gave place to blows, until the evening wound up in a general fight. I always made a point of going to bed early, partly to get some sleep before the riotous performance came off, and also to avoid giving offence by refusing to play when asked to join in the game. About the middle of the night I was certain to be roused up by the noise, and the conquered hero of the evening’s fight generally came to me for consolation and sympathy. I remarked that whoever got the worst of the row always took great pains to prove to me how that under any other circumstances he must have given his adversary a most complete thrashing—an opinion which I always took good care to agree with, lest the theorist should take into his fuddled head to expound his doctrine by practical illustrations. Each in turn, as he got beaten, came to me; and all ended by becoming very confidential, and insisting on telling me their histories, which were not always either profitable or entertaining. One oldish man, the greatest gambler and the most constant and hardest drinker of the lot, took my fancy in spite of his sottish behaviour. He seemed a cut above his companions, and, on the rare occasions when he was perfectly sober, showed an amount of education and a polish of manner quite different either to his position or his associates. Although heavy drinking had told its certain tale, he still showed unmistakable signs of having been a gentleman, and a very handsome one too; and that this was apparent, even to the uncouth, rude men he was amongst, was clearly shown by their having christened him “Gentleman Bill,” under which name he was known, no one appearing to know what his real name was. I have often watched him, sitting alone by the fire, after his companions had gone to sleep, with his head resting on his hands, evidently deep in thought; and often wondered at the strange expression of grief,

remorse, and fear his face wore when he raised his head; and at the anxious, frightened starts he gave ever and again as he threw furtive glances around and behind him. Often he has sat there until the day began to dawn, sometimes sobbing deeply and muttering to himself; then he would throw himself on his hard bed, and, after a brief hour’s heavy slumber, rise ready for the day’s work, seemingly as merry and reckless as any of that noisy party. On one occasion I ventured to ask him what was the matter. His answer was as strange and wild as his behaviour.

“Matter? Yes, matter enough,” he said, hoarsely and slowly, but speaking distinctly and firmly. “It is surely matter enough to have lost all chance of happiness—nay, even peace—in this world, and to know that I have bartered it for hell in the next.”

I tried to get him to say more; but he turned sullen, and would not even reply to me. It was, therefore, greatly to my surprise that he came the next night to my bedside, and said—

“You asked me last night what was the matter. Then I would not answer. Now, if you will listen, I will tell my history—warning you first that in doing so I am putting my life in your hands.”

Anxious to hear what he had to say, I told him to tell me all, and trust me. Without further preamble he began his tale, which I take the liberty of calling

A SETTLER’S REVENGE.

I was not always the low, drunken ruffian you now see me. My father, a retired officer in the army, although not rich, was sufficiently well off, and gave me a first-rate education, sending me from Rugby to Oxford. After I left Oxford, I lived with my father for rather more than a year, and formed an attachment to one of our neighbour’s daughters. Not being in a position to marry, it was agreed that I should emigrate to Australia, in the hope of pushing my way; and that, if I was successful, Annie would follow as soon as I had a home to offer her. My father generously gave me a thousand pounds to start with; and full of hopes and happy visions of the future, I left England. With my capital—which in those days was a small fortune to a steady, persevering man—I soon had a snug station, and two years

afterwards wrote for Annie to come out to me. For the next five years my life was one constant stream of happiness, ever flowing on evenly and smoothly. One little girl we had, the light and sunshine of our home—a little bright-eyed fairy, with long, fair curls falling in a golden shower round her sweet, innocent, childish face, and with all the dear little coaxing, winning ways of a darling child. Oh, how I love to recal her musical laugh, her sweet little lisping voice, and in fancy to hear again the patter of her happy, flying feet! My wife, my second self—more dear to me than all the world! How can I tell how I loved her? Often during the long nights do I sit, as in days of yore, hand in hand, communing with her in the spirit. But enough of this. Let me tell you how you see me the low, polluted wretch I now am.

Our sheep and cattle had increased so much that it was necessary to find more country for them, and I therefore "took up" a considerable tract further inland; and as I required to be there much myself, we thought it best to make our home there. Accordingly, I got a comfortable house run up, and soon afterwards removed to our new home. Our new station was rather out of the way, the nearest neighbour we had being fourteen miles from us; but with plenty of occupation during the day, and abundance of books, and never tiring of our own society, the time never hung weary on our hands, and each day exceeded the last in happiness.

In the part of the country where we were, large numbers of blacks roamed about; but, although they occasionally stole a sheep, they never did us any real injury, and we used them kindly, giving them little trifling presents, such as flour, sugar, and now and then a bright-coloured handkerchief. The women, in particular, used often to come to my wife, and beg for some scraps of gay-coloured cloth. My wife once or twice tried to induce them to wear more clothes, by giving them old petticoats, &c., of her own, but without the desired effect. As soon as they got anything of the sort, they tore it into strips, and each took a piece and wrapped it round their heads; so that it was no very unusual sight to see some twenty or thirty "gins" and "lubras" round about the house, with the most gorgeous head-dresses, but minus almost everything else at all approaching to clothing.

Many a laugh we had at such a ludicrous sight; but the blacks seemed to think themselves great swells, and strutted about, giving themselves all sorts of absurd, conceited airs.

This quiet life was destined not to last much longer, and was to be interrupted by a tragedy so horrible as to be almost beyond belief.

One of our neighbours, a hot-tempered, violent man, when riding after some cattle, came on a party of blacks who were busily engaged in gorging themselves on one of his bullocks, which they had speared; and in his anger, hastily, and without considering the probable consequences, drew his revolver and shot one of them dead. For some days after this not a black was to be seen, and we began to think they had fled in a fright. I, for one, felt rather sorry—as they were sometimes very useful in cutting bark for roofing huts, and in tracking strayed sheep and cattle—and regretted that they should be driven from their natural home by such a thoughtless act of violence.

Ten days after this took place, I had to go to a muster of cattle at a station thirty miles from mine, and could not possibly return before the next day. My wife, for some unexplained reason, seemed loath to part with me, and even tried to persuade me to stay; but as I had lost some cattle, and hoped to find them amongst my neighbour's mob, I was anxious to go, and only laughed at her. Accordingly, I departed; but after riding about a mile, an unaccountable fear took possession of me, and, unable to resist it, I turned my horse's head, and galloped back.

When I got to the house, my fears appeared so ridiculous and groundless, that I made an excuse of having forgotten some trifling article, and after again kissing my wife and darling little May, I once more took my departure. Again the same feeling of despondence—a presentiment of some unspeakable horror—came over me, and I nearly turned back, resolved to give up the journey altogether. Would to God I had done so! Better far to have died then, happy and guiltless, than to have lived to become the wicked, miserable, sinful wretch that I now am, cast away and lost in this world.

Not before I reached the station where I was going did I recover my usual spirits; then, in the excitement of drafting and

branding cattle, I forgot my fears, or only remembered them to wonder at my weakness in giving way to such idle fancies.

Next day I returned home, taking with me a small mob of cattle which had strayed from my run, and joined my neighbour's herd. These I joined with the first mob of my own I found, and hurried onward, anxious to reach my house.

Again all my former forebodings returned, and with greater force than before. I could not, reason as I would with myself, divest my mind of the idea that some great misfortune was about to fall on me—that some horrible catastrophe was about to be revealed. I kept fancying I heard my wife and my child's voices ringing in my ears, calling upon me in wailing tones to return.

Galloping forward at reckless speed, my excitement increased as I neared the station, until the throbbing of the pulses in my head, and the violent beating of my heart, became painfully intense. In front of the station-house was a low hill, and when I reached the top of this, I saw, in the valley below me, the house, seemingly as I had left it the day before. The evening sun, shining brightly on it, cast long shadows, and the house and all about it looked so quiet, peaceful, and undisturbed, that my fears were at once allayed, and, uttering a prayer of thankfulness to Heaven, I reined my smoking horse into a walk, and rode slowly forward, allowing him to cool after his wild gallop, before turning him into the paddock for the night.

As I neared the door, no dogs as usual rushed out to meet me, no sign of life was visible; and it was with a beating heart that I dismounted and entered the house.

Merciful God, what a sight met my bewildered eyes! Amongst the scattered, broken furniture lay my wife's form, her lovely hair tangled and stiff with clotted blood, her dress torn into shreds and nearly pulled off her. With a low cry, I sprang forward, and lifted her in my arms. Cold, cold, and stiff; her head crushed, and her sweet face so bruised and disfigured that no trace of features could be discerned. And there beside her lay the body of my little darling May, with her poor little head crushed in by a blow from a savage tomahawk. Her childish face was unhurt, and looked as lovely in death as in life. Even the demons who had slain her could not find the heart to destroy her innocent, angel-like loveliness. As I pressed my lips to

hers, my senses forsook me, and I sank into a deep faint. When I regained consciousness, all around me was dark, and for hours I sat beside the indistinct forms of the dead, unable to think, scarcely believing all to be true, saying to myself that it was only a horrible dream from which I should soon awaken and find all well. As the daylight dawned, my brain recovered from the shock, and my senses returned, and I got up and walked about. Oh, that I could have relieved my pent-up feelings by a flood of bitter tears! My brain felt burnt up, and my heart seemed each moment to get harder and harder, and but one thought occupied my mind. A terrible demon had taken triumphant possession of my soul: the demon of revenge! Coolly I thought over my plans. Many thoughts of revenge suggested themselves to my burning brain; but all were dismissed as being neither complete nor terrible enough to satisfy me. In my frenzy, I actually prayed on my knees to the devil for help. How surely and horribly he answered me you will soon hear. Suddenly I grew calm: I had decided on my course of action.

Then I gently carried the two dead bodies of my loved and lost ones to a bed-room, and carefully washed away all traces of blood, and laid them side by side on the bed, strewing wreaths of flowers around them. Kneeling down by their side, I swore solemnly to carry out the plans of revenge I had formed, without hesitation and without mercy.

Until now I had given no thought to the servants; but going into the kitchen, I found the one woman servant lying murdered, like her mistress. My heart was so full, or so hardened, that I felt no pang of emotion; but muttering a repetition of my oath, I went straight to the store-house. As I expected, this was completely emptied of everything eatable. Had I wanted any proof that the blacks had perpetrated this murderous, wanton outrage, it was here. On the floor lay a black fellow's "waddie," covered with blood and hair, evidently the weapon used with such fatal effect.

I pass over the next few weeks. People wondered at the manner I bore my loss, and called me unfeeling, hard-hearted, and without natural affection. Had they but guessed the truth!—how I was patiently abiding my time, waiting quietly for my opportunity, when, like a wild, ravenous

tiger, I would suddenly spring on my victims and utterly destroy them.

For months I waited, but no blacks came. Then, judging rightly that they feared to return so long as I was there, I sold my station, alleging as a reason my repugnance to living on the spot where such misfortunes had occurred to me, and where I was constantly being reminded of them.

It was long ere the blacks took courage to come back to their old quarters; but by degrees they did so, and began to settle down to their old life, living on 'possum, kangaroo rats, yams, and, when not likely to be discovered, stealing a sheep or calf, and doing little odd jobs for the settlers in order to obtain a little flour, or—what they valued still more—sugar and tobacco.

Now was the time for me to commence operations; and, feverish from excitement, I prepared for indulging the worst and most devilish passion that man is prey to. First, I bought a dray and a team of bullocks, and loaded the dray lightly with stores, consisting chiefly of flour; but amongst the bags was one small one of sugar. I next went to various druggists' shops, and bought a large quantity of strychnine, representing that I wanted it to poison "dingoes" with. This I mixed with the sugar. Can you guess what I meant to do? Are you not afraid to sit here with such a black-hearted villain? Oh! I was mad—wild with grief, drunk with anger; lost to every feeling but an insatiable longing and eager, hungry craving for revenge: forsaking all to obtain it—freely giving up all hope of peace here and hereafter for its sake.

I felt almost happy when I started off up country, in the direction of my old station; it was the first real beginning of the terrible end, and I thought when all was completed I should be able to rest in peace. After days of tedious travel, I reached a small open space on the run, surrounded by dense forest and thick scrub. Here I determined to halt, and make the scene of my brutal wickedness. It was a favourite resort of the blacks, or had been, owing to there being a large waterhole in the creek, which was always well stocked with fish; and I felt certain I would not have to wait long before they came. Unyoking my bullocks, I allowed them to stray where they liked, never intending to use them again. I then found a spot in the scrub where I should be well hidden from view, but from which I could

command a clear sight of the little open space in front; and here I took up my quarters, anxiously waiting for signs of the blacks. Nor had I long to wait; for that very evening a small party of them came, and, seeing the dray with no one looking after it, drew near and examined it. Evidently they feared to meddle with it—thinking, no doubt, that the owner was not far distant—for they went away without touching anything. This, from what I knew of the timidity of their natures, was exactly what I expected. Soon after daylight next morning, I saw a large party of them come out of the forest, and march straight up to the dray. This time they were all armed with spears, waddies, and boomerangs, and were daubed all over their bodies and faces with red ochre, looking more hideous than even nature made them; and—no doubt wishing to strike terror into the owner of the dray, should he happen to be there, by their fierce looks and savage gesticulations—rushed forward towards the dray, brandishing their weapons and uttering loud, savage cries. Finding no one there, they began to ransack the contents of the load, and finally made off, taking with them as much flour as they could carry, and the fatal bag of sugar. For one moment a pang of remorse shot through my heart, and, for the first time, a glimpse of the horrible nature of my devilish purpose shone forth, and I started up and called loudly on the poor blacks to stop. Too late, too late! The unfortunate, deluded wretches only ran off the faster, no doubt thinking I wanted back my goods, and, with their usual cowardly fear of white men, fearing to face even one, knowing from past and bitter experience the deadly danger to be apprehended from the white man's gun. Heedless of danger, I followed, vainly anxious now to avert the cowardly deed of which I was guilty. But as I ran, the old hard, black feelings came over me, and the same wicked longing for revenge took full possession of my soul, and I gave up the wish to save the miserable savages. My desire again grew strong to watch the end.

How can I find words to tell you more? It is needless. Sufficient to say that I saw them mix up flour and sugar together, and allowed them to eat the poisonous compound without making the least attempt to stop them. Then such a scene of horror followed, that, mad as I was with rage and despair, I fled far into the bush. Oh,

how that terrible day seems to haunt me—how the shrieks of my victims ever seem ringing in my ears! In the morning I returned to the accursed spot, hoping to find one at least alive. Alas! all were dead—dead and cold; their bodies lying scattered about, in all sorts of cramped, twisted positions, showing the agony each had suffered, before death, more merciful than I, had finally taken compassion and pity on them.

My tale is told. From that hour to this I have never known one moment's peace. The phantom forms of those I murdered ever follow and pursue me—their shrieks of pain ever sound loudly in my ears! And worse—ten times worse than all, ever before me I see the sweet, sad faces of my lost wife and child, mutely and gently upbraiding me; and I feel that never—never through the endless eternity that hangs like a black cloud before me, shall I ever meet them; that in the great and awful future our paths must be far apart; that their home will be in the presence of a great God, kind and loving, where all is ineffable peace, and supreme joy and happiness; and that mine must be deep down in the darkest abyss of perdition, amid everlasting misery, anguish, and despair! For months I roamed through the bush, raving mad. And when, tired and reckless of life, I gave myself up to the police, and told my tale, I was called mad, and disbelieved. Then I took to gambling and drinking, in the vain hope of forgetting for a few brief hours all my misery. In this way I soon spent all my money, and since then have become what you now see me—a low, swearing, drunken sot, the boon companion of blackguards, ticket-of-leave men, and convicts.

"Next morning," continued Stevens, "he was missing, and we found he had quietly gone off, leaving sufficient money to pay for his share of the living expenses. From that day to this I have never heard of him."

"Do you think his tale true?" asked Bill.

"Yes, I do," replied Charlie, "he told it with all the appearance of truth; and—although, certainly, he may have been mad—evidently believed it himself. Besides, I have heard a report of something of the same kind of thing having happened many years ago."

"It is a strange story, at any rate," I said, "and I for one believe it to be true. To-

morrow night it will be my turn to tell you something, but I fear that anything I can relate will sound very tame after yours, Charlie. What shall we do to-morrow? Shall we make an early start, and push on to the Rakaia? It's a long drive—eighteen good miles—but as there is not a drop of water on the plain, I think it would be best to do so."

"So do I," put in Pat. "And if we spell the cattle for three or four hours in the heat of the day, they will not hurt much."

"All right, then," replied Stevens; "we will try. And if we are late we must send one ahead to put up the tent and prepare supper, so that it will be no great odds how long we take on the road. And I am going to turn in. You and Bill," he added, turning to Pat, "should take a turn round the cattle, and see they are all right. If they seem quiet and settled, we might chance them without watching. If not, it will be my watch at four in the morning, and I'll let them draw on towards the Rakaia. Good night, my boys."

BLACK DIAMONDS.

BY A COLLIERY VIEWER.

IT has often been said of late, and with truth, that "Old King Coal is a *dear* old soul." The rise in the value of coal throughout these islands during the past two years is something marvellous, and it has very naturally caused both surprise and alarm.

No doubt one of the causes may be traced to the development of the railway system throughout the globe, to the vast increase in steam shipping, and to the application of steam to almost every purpose where manual and horse labour was formerly employed.

In other words, it cannot be doubted that a constantly increasing demand may be taken as one great cause of the present high price of coal. But another powerful cause has been at work which must not be neglected if we want to form a correct view of the whole question: we allude to the position the men hold, and the amount of coal they cut per day.

We have had occasion to study very closely coal and colliers, and the various modes of working coal mines, since the year 1830; and, in looking over some old accounts of that date lately, we were much

interested in tracing the astounding changes which have taken place, and we purpose here to give the substance of those old records, and, as they continue—with some interruptions—down to the present time, a glance at the history of this important trade for that period—viz., from 1830 to the end of 1872—may thus be gained.

In the year 1830 I find that pitmen—I am speaking of Northumberland and Durham—worked on an average ten hours per day underground, and earned on an average 3s. 6d. per day; and boys, from eight years of age up to twenty years of age, worked from fourteen to seventeen hours per day, their earnings being in proportion to the men, the strongest young men earning 3s. per day.

At that time the coal trade here was a close monopoly, and entirely in the hands of the colliery owners. The London market was at that time entirely supplied from the coal field; and the council appointed by the body of coal-owners arranged the quantity of tons of coal each work was to send to the market per annum, the prices to be paid for working the coal, and all other matters connected with the trade.

The men were kept pretty well under at that time—their position, indeed, was little better than that of serfs; for if any man offended his master very seriously, the latter had the power of sending his name through the trade, and so preventing him getting employment at any other work in the district; and many were discharged, and thus sent forth really outcasts.

Now, if we contrast the amount of work and pay received by the miners in 1830 with the time worked and wages received at the present time, we shall find that at the former epoch the time worked per day was ten hours, earnings 3s. 6d. per day, and at the present moment the time worked is five hours per day, and earnings 7s. per day—the wages having been doubled, and time worked reduced one-half.

In 1832 a remarkable event occurred. An attempt was made to form a trades union amongst the pitmen, and this was so far successful that more than half of the men were enrolled in this union, and a great agitation took place, the men aiming at the removal of various grievances. Ultimately a strike took place, and some points were gained, the most important concession being the reduction of the working hours of the

boys underground to twelve hours per day; and this arrangement was never afterwards disturbed until the hours were reduced by Act of Parliament to ten hours per day on January 1st, 1873.

During the strike of 1832 some rioting took place, and some murders were also perpetrated; and a noble marquis had a very narrow escape from assassination. A general meeting of the pitmen was held on Shadow-Hill, on the Black Fell, six miles south of Gateshead. This meeting was addressed by the leader of the pitmen at that time, Mr. Thomas Hepburn, a man of very considerable intelligence, and also by others. During the progress of the meeting, the late Marquis of Londonderry, with his usual bravery, but rather rashly, made his appearance on the scene, and requested to be allowed to ascend the platform and address the meeting; and to this the leaders made no objection, and a long conference took place between the marquis and Mr. Hepburn. Now, it was known during the previous week that the marquis intended to address the meeting, and, as he was a very extensive colliery owner, many of the ignorant pitmen were very much prejudiced against him, and numbers of them were armed with pistols, for the avowed purpose of shooting the marquis.

We shall never forget that, while standing about twelve yards from the spot on which stood the marquis on that day, we were suddenly told to move a little on one side; and, on looking round, a tall miner was levelling a large pistol at the body of the unconscious marquis; and, when he was on the point of firing, a strong arm was raised, and he was prevented from doing so, and ultimately persuaded to put the weapon into his pocket. This man was a noted poacher, and well skilled in the use of firearms.

A few minutes afterwards our attention was arrested by a group of men who were in rather loud contention; and one of them, we discovered, had a short gun under his coat, which was intended for the same purpose of shooting the marquis. All this, and the conference going on upon the platform between the marquis and the pitmen leaders, was brought to an abrupt conclusion by a very strange occurrence.

The marquis, when he made his appearance on the common, was accompanied by a troop of horse, and those he left at a distance from the place of meeting; and at the

moment we have above indicated, one of those troopers having dismounted, his horse escaped and galloped off, and several mounted troopers pursued the escaped horse. An alarm was soon spread in the immense crowd of pitmen, it being surmised that the cavalry were about to charge them, and a general panic was the result; the whole crowd flying at once to the east, north, and west, the dreaded cavalry being posted on the south side.

There is no doubt that this occurrence saved the life of the marquis, as a large number of poachers' short guns and pistols were in the possession of the pitmen, for the express purpose of shooting him.

When the panic took place, the officer in charge of the troop did advance at a quick pace to look for their leader, and he joined them as quickly as possible, and mounting his horse, rode off.

This strike was terminated by the colliery owners making some concessions, the most important being, as already pointed out, the reduction of the boys' working hours to twelve hours per day.

Very shortly after the conclusion of this great strike, the organization of the men as a trades union fell to pieces; and it was not again revived, to any very considerable extent, until the year 1844, when another great struggle took place, having more remarkable results than any former strike. The pitmen now aimed at higher wages, shorter hours, and some regulations for ensuring greater safety for the lives and limbs of the men employed in coal mines.

Some slight concessions were made by the owners, after a protracted struggle, and a monthly agreement was substituted for the old yearly agreement; but the most important fruit borne by this contest was the total collapse of the combination hitherto kept up by the colliery owners.

The noble marquis again came to the front, and positively refused to join the masters in keeping up their regulation—that is, as to the vend each colliery was to make, the prices to be charged for the coals, and the prices to be paid to the miners.

The marquis, in fact, declared for free trade, and acted at once upon the principle. The other owners contrived for a few years to keep up their system; but ultimately all acted on the free principle, every one vending as much coal as possible, and getting labour as cheaply as possible, but in the

open market. This was a great revolution, and this led to the period of cheap coal, which comprises the period from 1844 to 1870.

Of course, coal mines were developed to an enormous extent during this period, and the production largely increased; but this rate of increase could not go on for ever.

The extended application of machinery has brought the consumption of fuel nearly up to the means of production, and the miners have reduced the output to such an extent as to cause the supply to be quite unequal to the demand, and hence the price has been enhanced to an enormous extent, good coal being now worth 24s. per ton at the pit, and coke worth 45s. per ton.

It must be noticed that the miners have now a trades union in each of the counties spoken of, and the entire body of men, both surface men and underground men, are members of this union. The men are acting under able, well-informed leaders, and they are now perfectly trained to obedience and united action.

Such a combination as this never existed before, and has only been made possible now by a great and increasing demand for coal, and by the great spread of general knowledge and information amongst the miners during the past twenty-five years.

It is apparent that we have here a power which may be used for bad purposes—or, at any rate, for purposes which operate against the interests of manufacturers and the population generally.

It is a fact that lately many poor people in Newcastle, the northern metropolis of coal, were suffering severely from cold, owing to the high price of fuel.

A great deal has appeared of late in print respecting the cost of raising coal to the surface, the wages earned by miners, and profits made by colliery proprietors; but, so far as we are aware, all these articles have been written by persons who can only make guesses on the matter, as they have no practical knowledge of the subject.

It is sufficient to remark here that coal mining always must be highly speculative in character. The occurrence of a fault or an accident may ruin the best mine any day.

One of the largest and best mines in Northumberland commenced to pay dividends in 1865—eight years ago—and that work was commenced in the year 1840; so that twenty-five years elapsed without a

farthing dividend, and of course a very large sum of money was expended during that time. Many fortunes have been lost in the coal trade, and many gained.

With respect to the profits made by coal and iron works, both branches are, as a rule, realizing large profits at present. Take an actual case which we are acquainted with: An extensive coal mine near Newcastle-on-Tyne has, from the 1st of January last up to Saturday, March 15th, vended 70,000 tons of coal, and the profits realized amount to £32,000. This is equal to 9s. per ton; and many works are doing as well, and some considerably better.

A great deal has been said about the rapid rise of men from the ranks of pit-men to be eminent viewers, and ultimately affluent colliery proprietors.

The number who have achieved this does not appear to us to be large; we have known a few, certainly.

Mr. George Elliott, the present member of Parliament for North Durham, is a notable example. His father was a coal miner, and George was from his earliest years very robust in health, active, and enterprising, and exactly a man who might be expected to succeed in any branch of business.

He of course laboured hard to improve himself in every respect, acquired the rudiments of knowledge mainly at a night school; and he found an opportunity, which he did not neglect, of advancing himself to the position of colliery viewer, and from this point his rise was rapid to influence and wealth.

He has risen only by the old method—hard work, great skill, and unflinching courage and determination.

Two more remarkable cases of working miners who have risen to great wealth may be found in Durham. These are Mr. Love, of Durham, and Mr. Joicey, of Gateshead Fell; and both these gentlemen are at the present moment realising upwards of £100,000 per annum from the coal mines they possess.

As to the future prospects of the coal trade and colliers, we could not do justice to that question without occupying considerable space; but we may observe that the present condition of the fuel trade is most certainly abnormal.

And both colliers and colliery proprietors ought to be on their guard, and not lose

their heads. Capital is flowing fast into the business, new mines are being opened out in all directions, machinery is being introduced for the purpose of cutting the coal—and this will shortly supersede the expensive system of hand labour—economy in the use of fuel is the order of the day; and all these causes combined must, at no distant date, effect a great reduction in the value of coal.

TABLE TALK.

A CORRESPONDENT: In Piccadilly—just now becoming gay and charming—on the pavement nearly opposite those mansions of the late Marquis of Hertford's so long untenanted, there is a sort of wooden shelf, supported at either end by stout posts. Its height from the ground is about five feet; it is not ornamental; and I think very few of the strollers from Pall Mall into the park who notice it as they pass by it on their way, know what use it had. It is the last, I believe, of a once long row of these long, narrow-topped tables, and it was put up for the men and women who, in the old coaching days, carried fruit in huge baskets on their heads from Brentford, Isleworth, and all the regions thereabout, to set their heavy loads on while they rested themselves on their way to the Covent Garden Market of our grandfathers. Before the days of waggons with springs, most of the strawberries grown round London were sent to market on the heads of these porters. In this way, the fruit arrived uninjured at its destination. Long files of these men and women, bearing baskets laden with ripe fruit, started from the country with their burdens with the first streaks of daylight in the summer sky. They got paid about six shillings a journey from a place as far distant say as Brentford is, and they frequently made the long journey from Brentford to Covent Garden and back twice a-day. So tempting were the wages to be earned by these feats of pedestrianism, that very many women of the labouring class came up in coal barges from Shropshire and other distant counties, or even tramped the whole way on foot, in order to obtain this employment. There was plenty of it for a couple of months, and the porters often took back to the country districts they came from, enough to support them through the dull winter months. For their comfort when they wanted a rest, the

high tables were put up that they might easily deposit their loads and as easily put them on their heads again, a fact that speaks of itself for the importance of this traffic in those days. I never saw the Piccadilly survivor I speak of put to any use: it seems to be unfitted for any but the purpose for which it was put up; and what that purpose was, I believe very few of the thousands of people who pass it know. I have therefore written these few lines concerning it, as any day the enterprise of Mr. Odger may convert it into a platform from which to display his loyal eloquence; and the day after, the zeal of our own edile, Mr. Aynton, may sweep it from the face of the earth, for from it Mr. Odger's voice might be heard in two, if not all three, of the people's parks.

THIS YEAR, EASTER falls on the 13th of April. The whole number of days in which Easter must fall is thirty-five. The earliest possible day on which it can fall is March 22nd. In the year 1818 it fell on that day, and cannot again happen on that day until the year 2285. The latest possible day on which this Christian festival can fall is the 25th day of April. To know the incidence of Easter Day is of importance to the almanac makers if to nobody else, as upon this feast depend the movable feasts, law terms, circuits of the judges, and all the principal race meetings. The day on which it must fall is settled by Act of Parliament (14 Car. II.), and the rubric of the Church. The Act gives the rubric the force of law by joining the enactment of the Prayer Book in these matters to the Act. The question itself has often suggested to the young mind, when relieving the tedium of a long sermon by reading the leaves prefixed to the book of common prayer, "Why should not Easter always fall on the same day?" I do not know how many well-educated people even understand the reason why Easter is a movable feast. The reason is that it was the object of those who fixed the day for the celebration of Easter to avoid the moon being at the full on the Sunday on which the offices for the Resurrection were performed. This result is secured in England by the ecclesiastical canon and by Act of Parliament.

MANY OF THE MOST curious customs recorded on the vellums of ancient days, in the old contemporary chronicles, or since

hunted out by antiquaries and bookworms, refer to Easter. We may, appropriately to the time, say a word or two concerning a few of them. One was an old superstition, chiefly Irish, that the sun danced on Easter Day. The dancing seems in some country-sides to have been observed by a contemplation of the reflection of the sun's rays in a clear pool of water. The fact that the dancing was only noticed on Easter Day arises probably from the practice of going out to see it dance taking place only on that day. In the "British Apollo," quoted in "Hone's Everyday Book," 1830 ed., vol. 1, col. 422, the question of the sun's dance on this day is asked and answered in halting verse—

"Q. Old wives, Phœbus, say
That on Easter Day,
To the music o' th' spheres you do caper;
If the fact, sir, be true,
Pray let's the cause know,
When you have any room in your paper."

To this stanza, the editor of the "British Apollo" thus replies—

"A. The old wives get merry
With spic'd ale or sherry,
On Easter, which makes them romance;
And whilst in a rout,
Their brains whirl about,
They fancy we caper and dance."

The verses hardly bear witness to so good a knowledge of the origin of the superstition as of the laws of doggerel rhyming. Another custom was this: A contributor to Brand's "Popular Antiquities," says he was sitting at the Talbot in Shrewsbury, "when he was surprised by the entrance of all the female servants of the house handing in an arm-chair lined with white, and decorated with ribands and favours." Not unnaturally, he asked them what they wanted, and was told in reply that they wanted to *heave* him. He could not in gallantry refuse to comply with "a request very modestly made, and by a set of nymphs in their best apparel." He was *heaved* accordingly; and after being lifted from the ground by these nymphs and "turned about," he had the "felicity of a salute from each"—no doubt, though it be not set down in the books, paying a penalty in shillings for the privilege of being thus *heaved* and saluted, and helping in his own person to maintain in existence this ancient Easter custom. This practice on Easter Day was—and is, perhaps—observed. Like many of these old customs, it had

an emblematic meaning, the interpretation being probably to be found in the Resurrection and Ascension of our Saviour having taken place on that day. Of course, as *heaving* was conducted by ignorant people, it was better that they did not know the origin of the custom they practised. It has now become rare, if not obsolete, we believe.

FIFTY YEARS HENCE, in all human probability, the historian will be able to state with accuracy to what extent France has suffered by the change in the methods of carrying on war. At the present time, we can only speculate as to what may happen. France is to have a great army as soon as the back of the last German is turned upon her territory. A million and a half of men will be the war strength. One million of men in their prime will make up an "active" army; this will be supplemented by a "territorial" army of half a million more. But this gigantic force may never be able to restore to France her lost military prestige. Time will tell. But the splendid spirit and élan of French troops are thrown away in engagements begun by advance in loose order, and ended by rifles and cannons fired by soldiers almost out of sight. The excitement of hand-to-hand contests is wanting; bayonets are crossed less often than ever; the dash of the French soldier can hardly ever display itself; and, in the changed order of military things, he has lost much and apparently gained nothing.

WHAT IS THE REASON of so few English visiting yearly that most charming of all watering-places, Gastein, in the Tyrol? During the last few years, there have never been more than six English there in any one season, though it has been yearly visited by both the emperors, Von Beust, Von Moltke, Von Roon, the King of Greece, and any number of Herzogs, Fürsts, Grafs, barons, and other German nobles. A most beautiful place, wonderfully cheap and comfortable, and, as Mr. Scadder puts it, "frightful wholesome." Many of the leading old men of Europe go there every year to be revived by its waters and air; but, be it marked, that if any woman ever do the same, she keeps it to herself. But, as regards the air, one must not stay there more than six weeks, unless one wishes the hair to begin to be braced off one's head; and, indeed, the in-

habitants over thirty, both male and female, are as bald as coots. Among other advantages, its not being far from Ober-Ammergau must not be forgotten.

A CORRESPONDENT: I submit two cases of country christenings, both of which tend to show that a parson cannot be too cautious as to how he takes the initiative in these matters. In the first, he asked the girl who brought the child to the font by what name she wished it to be called. "Luthy, thir," said she, with a lisp. "Lucifer!" said the scandalized clergyman—"dear me, that will never do," and forthwith christened it John—presuming, from what he supposed to be the name, that it must be of the male sex. In the second case, an ignorant couple went to the altar, and could not decide on the child's name. "Look in the Scriptures," said the clergyman; which they did, and lighted on Beelzebub, which, though it much struck their fancy, he positively declined to use. A second search brought Maharshalal-hashbaz (assurance in tribulation), which they so highly approved of that they both insisted on it; and the child had to be so named, as the clergyman could find no valid objection to it.

DOES THE READER remember Pope's epigram written with Lord Chesterfield's diamond pencil—a most perfect piece of wit and of flattery?—

"Accept a miracle instead of wit:
See two dull lines by Stanhope's pencil writ."

Let him hear this epigram on a pickpocket called Treble:—

"Treble, with pickpockets, they say,
A long time held the tenor of his way;
If this be true, and proved to be the case,
Then Treble's tenor has been thorough bass (base)."

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. No unaccepted MSS. will be returned until a written application has been made for them.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 277.

April 19, 1873.

Price 2d.

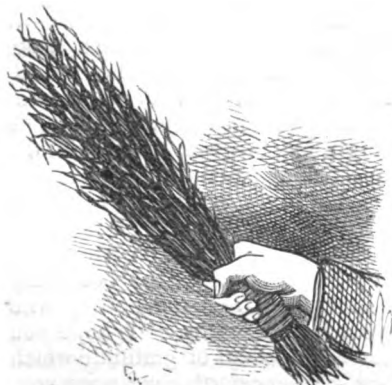
MY LITTLE GIRL.

A *Nobel*.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.
CHAPTER XXXV.



MR MACINTYRE is sitting in his easy-chair at home, in those respectable lodgings of his in Keppel-street. He is meditating on the good fortune that has come to him.

Perhaps he is too much inclined to attribute his success to merit rather than fortune; but in this we may pardon him. It is but two o'clock in the day, but a glass of steaming whisky toddy is on the table, and a pipe in his mouth. In spite of the many virtues which adorned this great man, I fear that the love of material comfort caused him sometimes to anticipate the evening, the legitimate season of comfort.

Nursing his leg, and watching the wreaths of smoke curling over his head, he meditated. And if his thoughts had taken words, they would have been much as follows:—

"After all my shipwrecks, behold a haven. I have been in prison. I have been scourged

by schoolboys. I have been tried for embezzlement. I have starved in the streets of London. I have been usher, preacher, missionary, tutor, retailer, sandwich man. I have at last found the road to fortune; not by honest means, but by lies and villainies, by practising on the honour of others. I have five thousand pounds in the bank, eleven pounds ten shillings and threepence in my pocket. Nothing can hurt me now; nothing can annoy me but ill-health and the infirmities of age. I have ten years, at least, of life before me yet. I shall go back to my own people. The Baillie will hardly refuse to receive me now that I have money. I shall be respected and respectable. 'Honesty is the best policy!' Bah! it is the maxim of the successful. I know better. Cleverness is the best policy. Scheme, plunder, purloin, cheat, and devise. When your fortune is made, hold out your clean, white hands, and say—'Christian brethren, I am a living example that honesty is the best policy.' I shall join this band; and at the kirk on the Sawbath, and among my folk on week-days, I shall be a living sermon to the young on the advantages of honesty. Respected and respectable, Alexander MacIntyre, retire upon your modest gains, and be happy."

Just then a knock was heard at the door.

The visitor was no other than Hartley Venn. He had strolled leisurely from Arthur's lodgings, smoking all the way, with a smile of immeasurable content, and a sweet emotion of anticipation in his heart. Having once ascertained the address of the philosopher, he lost no time in making his way to the street. On the way he stopped at a shop and bought a gutta-percha whip, choosing one of considerable weight, yet pliant and elastic.

"This," he said to the shopman, "would curl well round the legs, in tender places, I should think?"

"I should think it would," said the man.

"Yes; and raise great weals where there was plenty of flesh, I should say. Thank you. Good morning. It will suit me very well."

He poised the instrument in his hand, and walked along. When he got to Kerpel-street, he showed his knowledge of human nature by going to the nearest public-house, and asking for Mr. MacIntyre's number. The potboy knew it.

Hartley presented himself unannounced, and with a bow of great ceremony—one of those Oriental salutations which were reserved for great occasions: he had not used it since his last interview with the Master of his college.

"I believe I have the honour of addressing Mr. Alexander MacIntyre," he began.

The tutor confessed to owning the name, and began to feel a little uneasy. However, he asked his visitor to take a chair.

"Thank you—no, Mr. MacIntyre—shall we say the Reverend Alexander MacIntyre?"

"No."

"We will not. The business I have to transact will not detain me long, and will be better done standing. You are, I believe, acquainted with Mr. Philip Durnford?"

"I am. May I ask—"

"Presently—presently. You are also, I believe, acquainted with Mrs. Philip Durnford?"

It was MacIntyre's chance, but he neglected it.

"The young person calling herself Mrs. Philip Durnford has, I believe, run away from him."

Venn gave a start, but restrained himself.

"One more question. You have often, I doubt not, reflected on the wisdom of that sentence of Horace, which might be inspired were it not the result of a world's experience. In that sense, too, you would perhaps urge, and very justly, that it might be considered as divine, since experience is a form of revelation. I offer you a paraphrase, perhaps too alliterative—

'Lightly the sinner leaps along the way,
Lamely limps after, he who bears the cane;
Yet, soon or late, there comes the fatal day
When stick meets back, and joy is drowned by pain.'

"Go on, sir," said Mr. MacIntyre, seriously alarmed, "and let me know your busi-

ness. Who are you? What have you to do with me? I have never set my eyes on you before."

"Do not let us precipitate matters. Patience, Mr. MacIntyre, patience. Although you have never seen me, you have perhaps heard of me from Mrs. Philip Durnford. I am her guardian—my name, sir, is Hartley Venn."

The philosopher, among whose more prominent defects was a want of physical courage, fell back in his chair, and began to perspire at the nose.

"Having learned from my ward the facts of the case—that you exercised practices undoubtedly your legal right in Scotland, and married her to Durnford by a special licence in this very room; also, that you suppressed the letter she sent me; and further, that you have been the prime agent and adviser in the whole of the business—it was but natural that I should desire to make your acquaintance. In fact," he added, with a winning smile, "I really must confess that I had imagined your breed to be now totally extinct—gone out with the Regent, and belonging chiefly to the novels of his period. For this mistake I humbly beg permission to apologize. I obtained your address partly from Arthur Durnford, an admirer of yours—I wish I could say follower—and partly from the potboy who supplies your modest wants. I hope you will remember the claim of gratitude which that potboy will henceforth have upon you. I had a struggle in my own mind—*διανόητα μερμήριζον*; for while I ardently desired to converse with you myself, I had yet a feeling that the—*the* penalty should be left to some meaner person. But I bore in mind the distinction of rank. You are, I believe, a graduate of a Scotch University?"

"Sir, you are addressing a Master of Arts of the Univairity of Aberdeen."

"Aberdeen is honoured. I wish we had had you at Cambridge."

Venn took the riding whip in both hands, passing his fingers up and down tenderly. MacIntyre saw now what was coming, and looked vainly round the room for a means of escape. Before him stood his tormentor. Behind the tormentor was the door. It is cruel, if you are to hang a man, first to stick him on a platform for an hour or so and harangue him; but perhaps, in the cases of lighter punishment, the suspense should be considered a part of the suffering. This

was in MacIntyre's mind, but he did not give it utterance, sitting crouched in the chair, looking at the whip with a terrible foreboding.

Venn went on moralizing in this dreadful way, suggesting the confidence of one who knows that his game is fairly caught.

"The chastisement I am about to bestow upon you, Mr. MacIntyre, is ludicrously disproportionate to the offence you have committed. You will reflect upon this afterwards, and laugh. On the highest Christian grounds, I ought, perhaps, to forgive you; and I dare say I shall, if I know how, after this interview. On the other hand, I have little doubt that the slight horsewhipping I shall give you will be considered by the Powers leniently, perhaps even approvingly. Let me for once consider myself an Instrument."

He raised his whip above his head. MacIntyre crouched down, with his face in his hands.

"I beg your pardon," said Venn, pausing, "I have something else to say. You will remark that I have passed over the question of disgrace. No disgrace, I imagine, could possibly touch you, unless it were accompanied by severe personal discomfort. It is this curious fact, by the way—do you think it has received the attention it deserves?—which leads me to believe in the material punishments of the next world. You will remark—I do hope I make myself sufficiently clear, and am not tedious."

"Ye are tedious," groaned the philosopher, looking up.

"I mean, there comes upon a man, in the development of a long course of crime and sin—say such a man as yourself—a time when no disgrace can touch him, no dishonour can be felt, no humiliation make him lower than he actually is. He has lost not only all care about the esteem of others, but also all sense of self-respect. He is now all body and mind—no soul. Therefore, Mr. MacIntyre, when a man reaches this stage, on which I imagine that you are yourself standing now, what is left for him? How, I mean, can you get at him? I see no way of attacking his intellect, and there remains then but one way—this."

Quick as lightning, with a back stroke of his hand, Venn sent the whip full across MacIntyre's face. He leaped to his feet with a yell of pain and fear, and sprang to the door. But Venn caught him, as he

passed, by the collar, and then, first pushing the table aside, so as to have a clear stage, he held him firmly out by the left hand—Mr. MacIntyre was but a small man, and perfectly unresisting—and with the right administered a punishment which, if I were Mr. Kingsley, I should call grim and great. Being myself, and not Mr. Kingsley, I describe the thrashing which Mr. Venn administered as at once calm, judicial, and severe. A boatswain would not have laid on the cuts with more judgment and dexterity, so as at once to find out all the tender places, and to get the most out of the simple instrument employed.

But it was interrupted, for, hearing the door open, Venn turned round and saw a lady standing in the room watching him. He let go his hold, and MacIntyre instantly dropped upon the floor, and lay there curled in a heap.

A lady of middle age, with pale face and abundant black hair, dressed in comely silks. For a moment, Venn thought he knew her face, but dismissed the idea.

"Mr. MacIntyre?" she asked, hesitatingly.

"He is here, madam," replied Hartley, indicating with the whip the recumbent mass beneath him.

The lady looked puzzled.

"I am extremely sorry your visit should be so ill-timed," said Hartley, politely. "The fact is, you find our friend in the receipt of punishment. His appearance at this moment is not dignified—not that with which a gentleman would prefer to see a lady in his rooms. Perhaps, if your business is not urgent, you would not mind postponing your call till to-morrow, when he may be able to receive you with more of the outward semblance of self-respect. We have not yet quite finished."

"Don't go," murmured the prostrate sage.

Venn spoke calmly, but there was a hot flush upon his cheeks which spoke of intense excitement.

"Pray, madam, leave us for a few moments together—I am still in high spirits."

"I prefer ye in low spirits."

This was the voice of MacIntyre, lying still crouched with his face in his hands.

"Really, sir," said the visitor, "I think I ought to remain. Whatever Mr. MacIntyre has done, you have surely punished him enough."

"I think not," said Venn. "As you are apparently a friend—perhaps a believer, in

Mr. MacIntyre—"I will tell you what he has done."

He told her, in a few words.

The lady looked troubled.

"The other one, you observe, madam, a young fellow of six and twenty, had still some grains left of morals and principle—they were sapped by Mr. MacIntyre; he had still the remains of honour—they were removed by Mr. MacIntyre; he still called himself a gentleman—he can do so no longer, thanks to Mr. MacIntyre. Do you want to hear more?"

"And the girl—where is she?"

"She is with me, madam. She is my ward."

"Perhaps, sir, Mr. MacIntyre would get up, if he were assured that there was no more personal violence intended."

Mr. MacIntyre shook a leg to show that he concurred in this proposition, and was prepared to listen to these terms.

"Get up," said Venn, sternly.

He slowly rose, his face and hands a livid mass of bruises and weals, and staggered to his feet. His coat was torn. His eyes were staring. His face, where the whip had not marked it, was of a cold, white colour. He stood for a moment stupidly gazing at Venn, and then turned to the lady. For a moment he gazed at her indifferently, then curiously, then he stepped forward and stared her in the face; and then he threw up his arms over his head, and would have fallen forward, but Venn caught him, as he cried—

"Marie!"

They laid him on the floor, and poured cold water on his forehead. Presently he revived and sat up. Then they gave him a glass of brandy, which he drank, and staggered to his feet. But he reeled to and fro, like unto one who goes down upon the sea in a great ship.

"It is Marie," said the lady. "It is more than five and twenty years since we met last. You were bad then—you seem worse now. Tell me what new villainy is this that you have committed?"

"Marie!" he began, but stopped again and turned to Venn. "Sir, you do not understand. Some day you will be sorry for this outrage upon a respectable clergyman, who cannot retaliate because his cloth forbids. Let me go and restore myself."

He slipped into the back room, his bedroom, and they saw him no more. Had

they looked out of the window, they might have seen him slipping from the door, with a great-coat about him and a carpet-bag in his hand, his face muffled up and his hat over his eyes. He got round the corner, and calling a cab, drove straight to his bank.

"Can I help you in any way, madam?"

"I called here to ask for the address of a Mr. Philip Durnford."

"That at least I can procure for you. For Mr. Philip Durnford is none other than the man of whom I have spoken."

She sat on a chair and answered nothing for awhile.

He, wondering, looked on silent.

"Oh, there must be a mistake. Philip would never do it. Oh, Philip, my son, my son!"

The words seemed extorted by the agony of sharp pain.

"Your son?" cried Hartley.

"Ay, my son. Let the world know it now. Let it be published in all the papers if they will. My son, my son!"

Then she seemed to regain her composure.

"Sir, you have the face of a gentleman."

"That must be the Bishop's doing," murmured Venn, "not the glue man."

But she did not hear him.

"You may, perhaps, keep a secret—not altogether mine. I am Madame de Guyon—yes, the singer. I am a native of Palmiste. Philip Durnford is my son."

Venn sat down now, feeling as if everything was going round with him.

And here let me finish off with Mr. MacIntyre, from whom I am loath to part.

His lodgings knew him no more. The things he left behind paid for the week's rent due. He drove to the City, drew out all his money in drafts on an Edinburgh bank, and went down to Scotland that very night by the limited mail. As soon as his face was restored to its original shape and hue, he went to his native town and took a small house there, after an interview with the Baillie, his cousin, who, finding that he had a large sum to deposit in the bank, received him with cordiality, and even affection.

He lives there still, respected by the town, as is right for one who left the country and returned with money. He is

consulted on all matters of finance, speculation, education, doctrine, morals, and church discipline. He holds views perhaps too rigid, and his visitations on minor offences are sometimes more severe than the frailty of the flock can altogether away with. He is never seen drunk, though it is notorious that he drinks a good many tumblers of toddy every evening. He spends the mornings in his garden—a pursuit which has always attracted great men in retirement; and on wet days in his study, where he is supposed to be elaborating a grand work on metaphysics. In conversation he is apt to deal too exclusively with principles of an abstract nature; and his friends complain that, considering he has been so great a traveller, he tells so few tales of his own experiences. Palmiste Island he never mentions. As for the story of his life, no one knows it but himself, and no single episode has ever got down to his native town. In all probability he will go on, as he said himself, respected and respectable, till the end—a living example of the truth of the proverb that “Honesty is the best policy.”

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MARIE, when she told George Durnford that she had a great voice, spoke less than the truth. She had a magnificent voice; a voice that comes but once or twice a century; a voice that history remembers, and that marks an epoch in the annals of music. With the money that Durnford gave her, she devoted herself to its cultivation. She did not hurry. In Italy she studied long and diligently, until, at the age of six and twenty, she was able to make her first appearance in London. She had hoped to please her old lover and interest him in her success; but he answered hardly any of her letters, and only coldly acquiesced in her schemes for the future. For George Durnford's love had long disappeared from his heart: it vanished when he married Adrienne. He looked on poor Marie as a living witness of a time that he repented. He wanted, having assured her against poverty, neither to hear from her nor to see her again. He was fated not to see her; and when she wrote to him, telling of the great success of her first appearance, he tore the letter into shreds, and inwardly hoped that she would never come back to Palmiste. It is not exactly

cowardice, this sort of feeling; nor is it wholly shame. It is, perhaps, the feeling that prompts one to put away all signs and remembrances of sickness and suffering. We do not like to be reminded of it. There are thousands of respectable, godly, pure-minded fathers and husbands who have a sort of skeleton in the closet, hid away and locked up, as it were, in their brain, not to be lightly disturbed. In providing for Marie and taking charge of her son, Mr. Durnford had done, he thought, enough. There was no longer any possibility of love—let there be no longer any friendship. And so her letters worried and irritated him, and his answers grew colder and shorter. From time to time he read in the papers of her success. Madame de Guyon appeared at the Italian Opera. She was described as of French descent—some said from Martinique; none thought of Palmiste. She was said to be a young and strikingly beautiful widow. Her reputation was absolutely blameless; her name was widely spread about for those graceful deeds of charity which singers can do so well. And when, after a few years of the theatre, she withdrew altogether from the stage, and it was stated that henceforth she would only sing in oratorios and at concerts, everybody said that it was just the thing that was to be expected of a singer so good, so charitable, and so pious.

He once wrote to her, advising her to marry again; nor did he ever understand the bitter pain his letter caused her.

For women are not as men. It seems to me that women can only give themselves wholly and entirely to one man. To other men they may be thoughtful, and even tender; but one woman is made for one man, and when she loves she loves once and for all. Marie had told her old lover that she loved him no more—that what had been could never come again. *It was not true.* What had been might at any time have come over again. The old idol of her heart was not shattered. It was erect, and stronger than ever—strengthened by the thought of her boy; fostered by the memories which ran like a rivulet through the waste and loneliness of her life, filling it with green things and summer flowers; and held in its place by that constancy of woman which is proof against time, and circumstance, and absence, and neglect. George Durnford loved her no longer. He did

not, it is true, understand her. That magnificent nature, which had been like some wild forest plant, unchecked in its luxuriance, when he knew it best, was developed by training and sorrow to one of the most perfect types of womanhood. What more splendid than the full maturity of her beauty when she swept across the stage? What more perfect than the full rich tones of a voice that thrilled all listeners as she sang? And what—could he only have known it—more precious than the riches of the thoughts which welled up in her mind with no listener to impart them to, no husband to share them? But George Durnford died; and only when she heard of his death was she conscious of the space he occupied in her mind. She saw it in the papers; for no one wrote to her, or knew of her existence. Then she got the Palmiste papers, and read first of his funeral, and the fine things that were said about him, and then of his will; and next she saw the names of the two boys as passengers to England. And presently she began to live again, for she hoped to meet her boy, and—after many days—to reveal herself to him, and get back some of the love she lavished upon him in imagination. She did not hurry. She preferred, for many reasons, to bide her time. First, because she thought him ignorant of his birth; secondly, she thought that it would be better to wait till he was a man, and could better bear what would certainly be a bitter blow—the stigma of his birth; and, lastly, she was afraid. George Durnford had said but little about him. He was growing tall and handsome; he was strong and clever; he was a bold rider and a good shot. All this she learned from his letters, but nothing more. In the last letter he had ever written to her, he mentioned that Philip was going into the army. And after some time she bought an Army List, and read with ecstasy the name of her son in the list of ensigns. She never attempted to see him, but she saved her money—she had made a good deal of money by this time, and had left off singing in public—and laid it out judiciously for the future benefit of her son. If Philip had only known!

She lived in her own house near Regent's Park, where she saw but few friends, and those chiefly of her own profession. Her life was not dull, however. It was brightened by the hope that lived in her. Morning and evening she prayed for her son; all day

long she thought about him; at night she dreamed of him. She pictured him brave, clever, and handsome; she made him her knight, young Galahad, without stain or blemish of sin; and she trembled at the thought of meeting him—not for fear he might fall below the standard she had set up, but for fear of her own unworthiness. She was to go to him, some day, with the bitter confession of his mother's sin. She was to say, "You are separated from other men by a broad line. They may rejoice in their mothers—you must be ashamed of yours." She was to ask him, not for that love and respect which wives can get from their sons, but for love, and pity, and forgiveness. She was to blight his self-respect and abase her own. No wonder that she hesitated, and thought, year after year, that there was time enough.

But one day, looking at the familiar page in the Army List, she saw that her son's name was missing, and on looking through the *Gazette* she found he had sold out. This agitated her. Something must have happened. He had abandoned his career. He might have married. How could she face his wife? Or he had met with some misfortune. How could she ascertain what? She did not know what to do or to whom to apply. The weeks passed on. She was in great anxiety. At last, unable to bear any longer the suspense of doubt, she went to a private inquiry office, and set them to work to find Mr. Durnford's address. It was quite easy to ascertain where he had lodged before he sold out, but impossible to learn where he was now; only the lodging-house people gave the address of his friend, Mr. MacIntyre, and his cousin, Arthur Durnford. This was all she wanted. Of the two, she would first try MacIntyre. She knew him of old. He was unscrupulous, she well knew, and still poor, as she suspected. She would bribe him to give her Philip's address, unless he would do it for nothing.

All this is by way of explanation of her sudden appearance at a moment so inopportune, when dignity was utterly out of the question, and her old acquaintance showed to such singularly small advantage.

The shock of Venn's intelligence was for the moment too much for her.

"I fear I have hurt you," said Hartley. "Pardon me, I was careless of my words. Did I understand him rightly? He said that—that—"

"Where is he?" asked Marie. "Bring him here."

Venn opened the door of the bed-room and looked in, but no one was there.

"He is gone, madam. Pray let me be of assistance to you. I can give you Mr. Durnford's address. It is at Notting-hill that he lives."

"Stay. First, the young lady you spoke of, sir—your ward. Could I see her?"

Venn hesitated.

"She is ill—she has just lost her husband. Would it do any good if you were to see her?"

Marie looked him straight in the face.

"I have not seen Philip Durnford for twenty-five years, and I am his mother." She blushed like a girl. "It is twenty-seven years ago," she murmured. "I am a native of Palmiste Island."

"Good God!" said Venn, thinking of Arthur.

"I put my story in your hands, though I do not even know your name. You may, if you please, publish to the world the shame and disgrace of a woman that the world has always believed pure and good. But I think you will not do that."

"I?" cried Venn. "Great heavens! why should I? My name is Venn, Madame de Guyon. My father was Mr. George Durnford's tutor, and I am a friend of Arthur Durnford. My ward—the little girl that I brought up and made a lady of—is the grand-daughter of my old laundress. Your son made her acquaintance—and—it is best to let you know the whole truth—made her promise to hide the fact from me; brought her here to these very rooms, one evening six months ago, when Mac-Intyre married, pretended to marry them—I don't know which. Then he took her to France. She will tell you the rest, perhaps, herself."

"Advise me what is best to do," cried Marie, in deep distress. "Oh, sir, if I have but found my son to lose him again!"

"At all events, you shall see his wife," said Venn. "You will be very kind to her? Yes, I see you will. But there are other complications."

Then he told the story of the transferred property, just as he had heard it from Arthur an hour before.

"But I was never married," said Marie, simply.

"Then Mr. MacIntyre, who is really a

scoundrel of quite the ancient type, and, as one may say, of the deepest dye, has been forging the letters; and we shall, perhaps, have the pleasure of seeing him in a felon's dock before long."

"Promise me again," cried Marie, alarmed, "that you will keep my secret, whatever happens."

"I have promised already," said Venn. "Not even Arthur Durnford shall hear a word. But it seems a pity to let the Mac-Intyre go."

"Then take me to your ward," Marie asked him.

"She is staying at my sister's house. Do not tell my sister, if you see her, anything. She is a most excellent woman, Madame de Guyon, and as silent as death on unimportant matters; but in the matter of secrets I believe she is too confiding. She imparts in confidence all that is entrusted to her in confidence, and considers she has kept a secret when she has not proclaimed it at church. Just now, however, she is not likely to be inquisitive, because she is greatly excited at being excommunicated."

"Excommunicated?"

"Yes; she gave her cat the name of St. Cyril. On her refusal to change it, her clergyman, who holds rigid views, has excommunicated her. It is the greatest excitement that has ever happened to her, and she attends all those ordinances of religion from which she is debarred by her own director at an adjacent Low Church, where the clergyman parts his hair at the side, wears long whiskers, and reads the prayers with solemnity and effect. But I beg your pardon, Madame de Guyon, for inflicting these family details upon you. Let me get a cab for you."

He returned in a few minutes, and they drove to Miss Venn's house. His sister was out. As he afterwards learned, there had been a prayer-meeting at the Evangelical clergyman's school; and as nothing irritated the Rev. Mr. De Vere so much as a public prayer-meeting, she went there ostentatiously. By the greatest good luck, he was passing as she went in, and saw her, so that she enjoyed her meeting extremely.

Laura was lying on a sofa, reading. Her pale cheeks brightened up when Hartley came in.

"What is my ward doing?" he asked. "Not reading too long, I hope. I have brought you a visitor, Lollie. Madame de

Guyon, this is my ward, Mrs. Philip Durnford."

Laura looked appealingly at Hartley; but was more astonished when Marie went straight to the sofa, and kneeling down, took her face in her hands and kissed her, with tears in her eyes.

"I had better leave you, Madame de Guyon, I think," said Venn. "I shall wait in the dining-room for you."

Left alone, Marie began to tremble.

"My dear, I ought not to have kissed you. I ought, first, to tell you who I am."

"Who are you?" asked Laura. "I am sure, at least, you are very kind."

"My dear child, I hear that you have suffered. I want, if I can, to soothe your sorrow, and if it be possible, remove it."

"Ah, no one can."

"We shall see. Have you patience to listen to the story of a woman who has also suffered—but through her own fault—while you have only suffered through the fault of others?"

She told her own story. How poor and ignorant she had been; how George Durnford had made her proud and happy with a love of which she realized all the passion and happiness and none of the guilt; how he had told her, one day, that it was to be in future as if they had never met; how he had taken her boy, at her own request, and given her money to come to England; and how she had studied long and hard, and learned to make the most of a gift which is granted to few. And then her voice softened as she told how she had made fame and got fortune, and toiled on companionless, cheered by the hope that some day she might find her son, and pour into his heart some of the love with which her own was bursting.

"My dear," she said, "I found not my son, but his evil adviser—not his friend—Mr. MacIntyre. And my son is your husband."

Laura buried her face in her hands.

"Yes, I know it all. Mr. Venn has told me. Only, dear, you are not to blame. You are a wife—I never was. Let me find in you what I have lost. If I cannot win my son, let me win a daughter."

"Oh, madame," Laura replied, stroking back the thick brown hair that covered her face, "you are a lady, I am only a poor girl. How Philip could ever love me—he did love me once—I do not know. I am only Mr. Venn's little girl, and you are the only

lady, except Miss Venn and Madeleine, who has ever spoken to me at all."

"My dear, and I was only a singer at the theatre."

"But you are a great singer. And I—oh, madame!—and what will Philip say?"

"We will not care what Philip says."

"And then—oh! I am so unhappy!"

And she began to cry.

Marie cried too; and the two found consolation in the usual way.

Then Laura began to whisper.

"You had some comfort—you had a child."

"We will get you back your husband. Philip cannot be very bad, dear. He loved you once, at any rate."

She brightened up; but the moment after fell back upon the sofa, and burst into fresh tears.

"I shall never get him back. I *could* never see him again. You do not know what he called me—me, his wife. I *am* his wife, am I not? I could never look Mr. Venn in the face again if I were not."

"Yes, dear, you are his wife, surely you are. But I will go and see him."

"Take Mr. Venn with you. Let him speak for me."

"Would it be wise? No—I will go alone. If he will not hear me, he will certainly not hear Mr. Venn. And now, I must go. But, dear, my heart is very heavy. I am oppressed with a sense of coming evil. Tell me—if Philip, if my son, should not receive me well, if, after all these years of forbearance, he greets me with coldness and distrust—oh, tell me what he is like!"

Laura told her as well as she could.

"But Philip is passionate," she concluded, "and I think he has lost some money lately, and Mr. MacIntyre makes him do reckless things."

"I can manage Mr. MacIntyre," said Marie. "Besides, he is not likely to forget the lesson Mr. Venn has taught him today."

"What was that?"

Marie told her of the scene she had witnessed. Laura, usually the mildest of her sex, set her lips together, and clasped her hands.

"Oh, I am so glad—I am so glad! Was he hurt? Did he cry? Tell me all over again," she said.

Marie only smiled.

"Let me finish, dear. I have only one

proposition to make to my son. If he will not agree to that, I have one to make to you."

"What is it?"

"Would you like to go back to Philip?"

She clasped her hands, and began to think.

"He was so cruel. If I only could. If he would only take me. But I *am* his wife."

"And if he will not, will you come with me, child? My heart is empty, I long for some one to love. Come with me, and be my loved and cherished daughter."

Laura threw her fair young arms round her neck, and Marie kissed her passionately.

"I must go now," she said, after a few minutes. "I do not think I can go to your husband's—to my son's house to-day. I must wait till to-morrow. Write down his address, dear, on my tablets. And now, good-bye. Ask Miss Venn to let me come to see you. Tell her only that I am your husband's old friend; and remember to keep my secret till I see you again."

She went away. Presently came back Miss Venn, in a high state of exhilaration at the discomfiture of the Rev. Mr. De Vere, who, seeing her open act of rebellion, must have gone home, she concluded, in a furious state of indignation. This, indeed, the reverend gentleman had actually done. And she called loudly for St. Cyril—her cat—and sat down and made herself comfortable; and gave her brother a comfortable little dinner.

A GOOD INVESTMENT.

THE supreme delight of the capitalist, great or small, is a good investment, by which he of course means the utmost possible profit compatible with the security of his capital. In these days, too, he has an unlimited choice of every variety of investment, ranging from the public funds, which may be taken to represent the minimum of profit with the maximum of security, up, or down, to the most seductive gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, or other mining schemes, combining fabulous profits in prospect with very variable security. Unfortunately, the number of those to whom this very inviting, though embarrassing, choice is offered is somewhat limited. The delights of profitable investment belong only to those who have something to invest—only to those

happy mortals who have perhaps least need of such sugar-plums—the happy guild of capitalists. We have often wished, by the way, that one of those worthies would give us the opportunity, just for a few years, of trying whether great riches are really such a care and trouble as their possessors often try to make out.

Happily, the genius of commercial enterprise has devised a variety of ways whereby every man, who will live ever so little within his income, may share the joys and advantages of the investor in a limited degree. We have post-office and private savings banks, building societies, land companies, clubs, life assurance companies, and a miscellaneous assortment of limited joint-stock companies in small shares for effecting everything that is possible and some things that are not. The accumulated savings of the poorer classes of late years have reached an enormous ascertained amount, besides much that cannot be known—and it is a most happy circumstance; for we may assume that, when a man has once begun to save, he has passed the limits of what are called the dangerous classes, and become a source of strength to the commonwealth. No doubt, much of this aggregated capital is foolishly invested, and much is wasted and muddled away by extravagance, incompetence, and swindling; but a great deal remains as a permanent pledge of confidence in the stability of our institutions, as a proof of frugality and self-control, and as a strong barrier between independence and pauperism. Until men are enabled and will take the trouble to examine into investments for themselves, there must always be much waste of capital, and there is no investment into which men plunge so blindly and ignorantly as life assurance—we do not mean so much as shareholders in life offices, but as insurers and policy-holders.

It may at first sight seem strange to speak of insuring one's life as an investment; but we think it can be clearly shown that there is no investment for small annual sums that can be at all compared with a policy in an office of undoubted stability. There are plenty of such offices to be found, as we shall hereafter explain; and therefore the investment needs never be more speculative than Government stock or railway debentures. We shall for the present, therefore, assume the stability of the office chosen, and look at the matter from a profit and loss

point of view as compared with other investments for similar small annual sums.

In most investments, we risk the principal for the sake of a certain annual interest of, say from four to ten per cent.; and as we approach the latter rate, the risk of principal is great. In life assurance, on the contrary, we risk for a term of years or for life a certain annual premium of say from two to four per cent. only, in order that we, at a fixed period, or our heirs at our death, may receive the principal. The latter course would make every man practically and for most purposes a capitalist.

The assurer has, first, an incontestable advantage over the ordinary investor in case of early death. This is not a "bull," but a plain, self-evident fact.

Second, even on the hypothesis of long life, the assurer is fully as well off as the average investor—the security being assumed to be equal in both cases. It will be admitted that a man's chief object in saving such small annual sums is to leave something to those dependent on him when he dies. It is, of course, not the only object. Most men entertain a vague expectation of some day saving and speculating or trading to the extent of competency, and a few attain it in old age. Many more lose all in the effort, and many die before it is accomplished. Then every man likes to have a few pounds by way of "nest egg," to stand between him and any unforeseen calamity. Both of these worthy aims may, however, be pursued simultaneously with a life policy for a moderate amount; or they may be all combined by a policy payable at a fixed period—say sixty or seventy years of age—or at death, if that occur before. Assurance can thus be made to serve every good end of saving.

Let us compare the position of two men of thirty years of age, one of whom invests £10 per annum in the ordinary way in some safe concern paying four per cent. per annum, compound interest, and the other a similar sum for a life assurance policy of £400, payable at death, in a good office, paying one and a half per cent. per annum as bonus on the policy and accumulations—and this he could do easily enough. The risk of the company failing is certainly not so great as that of the investments depreciating, or vanishing altogether. Now, suppose both men live for thirty-two years and then die, the position of their heirs will be

just the same—that is, one man's investments with four per cent. compound interest will only equal the other man's policy with bonuses added—the sum in each case will be £626. Now, safe and profitable investments are difficult to find for small sums for a long term of years; and, when found, how many men are there who would rigidly adhere to the resolution to save the £10 every year, and never encroach on the fund for sickness, holidays, increasing family, or other pressing emergencies? We think few could be so determined.

On the other hand, the life premium becomes a sacred claim as a provision against early death. He knows he cannot withdraw without loss. True, this may be made to appear a drawback—the inability to get at the whole of the fund for any urgency—and it is an argument against excessive assurance; but looked at as a permanent investment, this very feature is a great advantage.

The investor, then, has no advantage over the assurer until after thirty-two years of the experiment, and how many years of life can he expect after an average age of sixty-two? Only two or three, for the average expectation of life at the age of thirty is about thirty-four years, and only about half the men of thirty live to attain sixty-four.

These two men of thirty have thus about an even chance of living to the age of sixty-two, when the comparison between them may be fairly said to begin; but in the event of death at any time before this age (also an even chance), there can be no comparison whatever. The assurer is, in the first year, in as good a position as the investor twenty years later, besides being freed, all the time from the first, from the care and anxiety which beset the saving man during the whole period. This is an item that cannot be computed in money, but it is a vital one. What is one of the chief causes of premature death? Surely the worry and anxiety about our health and our prospects, and those of the dear ones we may leave behind. Certainly, no measure of precaution can do more to reduce this "life canker" than life assurance. The success of the saving and investing man depends upon prolonged life, which is the most uncertain item in the whole account. How futile, in most cases, is the confident boast, "Oh, I can do better by investing my savings some other way."

One strong objection of this class to life as-

insurance is the difficulty of recovering any considerable part of the premiums paid, should circumstances compel a discontinuance of the policy. Doubtless, the practice of some offices has given colour to this; but at present we are assuming that a well-managed office has been chosen, and if this be done, we unhesitatingly affirm that the objection is utterly worthless. Life assurance is a mutual undertaking. Granted a sufficient number of good lives for an average, paying fair premiums, and with careful management the yearly premiums accumulated will suffice to meet all claims by death without encroaching on reserve capital at all. Each man helps to assure his neighbour, and a portion of his premium is hypothecated to meet the death claims of each year; in return for which, he is himself assured, and may, for aught he knows, be the very next to cause a claim. How, then, can he, on withdrawing, expect, with any justice, for a return of this moiety? Besides this, another moiety of his premiums every year has gone for necessary expenses, and how can he expect a return of this?

It will thus be seen that he must, in justice, be content to forfeit, on withdrawing, a considerable portion of his premiums, for which he has had full value in having the risk of his death covered all these years by the office. Out of the remaining moiety, the surrender value must come; and when we find that respectable offices will give back as surrender value a sum equal, according to age and duration of policy, to from twenty-five to fifty per cent. or more of all the premiums paid, surely reasonable men cannot expect more. Dropping a policy is usually considered a bad thing for the assurer; but good offices, which return a fair surrender value, do not like and do not encourage a surrender of policies, considering them a source of loss, inasmuch as it is usually the strong, confident lives that withdraw.

The assurer should beware of offices which do not clearly state the surrender value, and especially of such offices as give none at all.

We have now to look at the security of assurance offices, and to state a few salient features which may help intending assurers to distinguish the safe from the unsafe. Since the scandalous and lamentable fiasco of the European, the Albert, and other smaller companies, the public have, not un-

naturally, been shy of life assurance, and suspicious of even the soundest. This distrust is, however, not at all justified by facts, and is the result of unreasoning panic and ignorance of the principles of assurance. Any competent actuary, or even any shrewd business man, with the figures before him, could have detected the rottenness of these concerns, or could certainly have seen how inferior they were to a host of others; and no business man can be excused for trusting a company without having full statements of accounts to examine.

Although we cannot but commiserate the suffering assurers, yet they were, as a body, much to blame for blindly trusting such important interests to doubtful security, thereby bolstering up rotten structures for the benefit of the interested few. Let no assurer be hurried into an office by the agent's importunity, and on the strength of his assurances alone, but let him examine for himself or take good advice.

In theory, nothing can be sounder and safer than the principles of life assurance. The life tables and premium tables generally used, although they differ somewhat, are all based upon study, experience, and keen observation, extended over many years, and including a wide range of actual life. Therefore it is, as stated above, that if an office has a sufficient number of carefully selected lives to constitute a safe average of mortality, if the premiums are even moderate, and the management careful and honest, then the collected premiums from the first ought to suffice to meet the average mortality of the members, and only a very small capital is really necessary for starting. The matter has almost been reduced to a mathematical certainty. This is the theory, and there are plenty of companies which fulfil all these conditions faithfully; but, of course, such is not always the case. Incompetence, and extravagance, and dishonesty will sometimes creep in and disturb the best calculations, and it is to provide against these contingencies, and to give confidence to the public, that most offices have some reserve capital in addition to savings—but not, we repeat, from any inherent defect in the principles of the science.

Many high authorities might be quoted in support of this statement. Professor De Morgan says—"There is nothing in the commercial world which approaches even remotely the security of a well-established

life office. The certainty is the thing contracted for. Trade and speculation *might* have realized more profit. Trade and speculation *might* have realized ruin."

Another distinguished writer affirms—"Not only is insurance the means of guarding against a contingency; but, still further, if the office be a good one, it is probably the best investment that can be chosen by a prudent man, provided that he does not over-insure, and so run the risk of being obliged, at some future time, to relinquish his policy. We say this advisedly, and—even supposing a man has the *certainty* of living to an advanced age—the excess of premium he will have paid will be more than counterbalanced by bonus additions."

An eminent actuary and mathematician says—"There are no grounds for apprehending, under any possible circumstances, a crash amongst the life offices, as amongst railroad or other speculative undertakings; for the business investments of life offices do not partake of a speculative character. Even a panic in the money market, which brings destruction upon other interests, must benefit the life office by raising the value of money, which is their only stock in trade."

It is thus clear that nothing but bad management on the one hand, fostered by blind confidence on the other, can bring a life office to ruin. What, then, are the salient features of a sound and prosperous office, and how shall we distinguish the wheat from the chaff?

Accounts.—We should be extremely shy of offices which do not publish full and clear statements of accounts which can be understood by an ordinary business man. At one time, this reticence was displayed by nearly all offices; but since competition has become rife, we may be sure no office will fail to publish, much less strive to conceal, any facts to its credit. The late Act of Parliament for regulating life offices compels returns of so full and searching a character that frankness is now scarcely the virtue which it certainly was before, and no one should be satisfied with an office until he has examined its returns made in conformity with this act.

Management.—We should look at the character and standing of the directors, manager, and actuary of an office. Very grand names on a board are too apt to be mere dummies. Respectable business

men of character and capacity are safest. All calculations and valuations should be done under the auspices of a qualified actuary, as these are the vital springs either of prosperity or ruin, and they cannot be checked and overlooked except by professional men.

Extent and Age.—No doubt young offices, beginning small, but carefully managed, are often safe, else how could any office ever become old? but no one is bound to imperil such an important interest as life assurance in order to help in starting a new company. Therefore, in the search after absolute security, a wide field of choice is still left open, even if we exclude all offices with fewer than 3,000 policies and of less than twenty-five years' standing. We do not say that fair security may not be had short of these requirements; but while there are plenty of offices possessing these well-marked features of superiority, and even in a much higher degree, why should the assurer run any risk whatever? It is positively wrong to allow family, friendly, or business connections and influences to determine a matter of such vital importance to one's dependent family, perhaps half a century hence.

A fair extent of business is necessary to give a just average of mortality, and the age of the office is a proof of stability and of good management in the past, which proof is greatly strengthened if the age be nearer fifty years. At this age, an office has assured and paid off an entire generation of lives, and nearly another. If such an office is still doing an increasing business, and holds ample funds to meet existing liabilities, then, indeed, we have the strongest proof of sound principles honestly and ably carried out in the past, and forming the best of all guarantees for the future.

Capital.—Some offices industriously advertise their total funds in startling figures of millions, without saying a word about their liabilities; and some boast of their immense business without showing what funds are held to meet their liabilities. This is a most dishonest and delusive practice, fitted only to catch women and children. We should look at the proportion of funds and liabilities. It is impossible to fix this proportion exactly, even with offices of the same age, inasmuch as that office which has done a rapidly increasing business does not

need so much funds in hand, in proportion to policies, as that office which has remained about stationary, as some have done. In the latter case, it will be seen that a larger proportion of the policies running must be on older lives, and likely to become claims sooner; hence the need of larger proportionate funds. This is an important but abstruse point, which the new Parliamentary returns disclose.

Speaking broadly, it may be taken that, if an office of thirty to forty years' standing holds invested funds, consisting either of capital or accumulations, or both combined, equal to six or seven years of present income from all sources, then it may be considered perfectly safe. Or, taking it another way, if these invested funds equal over twenty per cent. of the total of policies and bonuses outstanding, there need be no anxiety whatever.

Valuations.—There should be periodical valuations of all policies every five or seven years, by a professional actuary; and these should be conducted on the same mortality tables, and at the same rate of interest, as were employed in fixing the premiums of the office. These matters are difficult to check by the ordinary assurer—hence the necessity of a management above suspicion. Further, we should be sure that in valuing the future premiums, the entire loading—which is added to cover expenses and profit—is excluded from the reckoning.

Constitution.*—There are excellent life offices on the mutual system, with no subscribed capital but large accumulations, and there are excellent offices on the mixed mutual and proprietary system, with accumulations and subscribed capital as well. These latter give, perhaps, a fifth or sixth of the profits to the shareholders as their reward for risk of capital, the remainder going to the participating policies as bonus. No doubt some of the old mutual offices are as safe as an office can be, but we fancy the public will always lean to the paid-up capital, which makes great age and high premiums less essential.

Premiums.—It is utter folly to enter a

doubtful office because its premiums are a few shillings less than an undoubted one; because, with fair management, the excess of premium will come back as bonus if you live long enough. If, however, we have the choice of two offices equally sound and safe, we should incline to the cheaper one, because we thereby get a larger policy at once for the same money, which, in the event of early death, is a great advantage; whereas, we may pay the higher premium for years, and not live long enough to benefit by the higher bonuses, and if we do happily live to a green old age paying the smaller premium, we shall probably think the prolonged life a sufficient reward, without regretting the extra bonus which we *might* have gained, only to leave it behind us at last.

A CASE AGAINST ALMA MATER.

III.

SINCE the first of these papers appeared in *ONCE A WEEK*, I have received from various sources some curious information respecting abuses at the sister University, which proves that in this respect the two Universities run one another pretty close. For example, with regard to the meaningless fines still imposed upon undergraduates for what were, in stricter times, grave breaches of discipline, but which, under the modern relaxed code, are no breaches of discipline at all, I am informed, on the best authority, that the black mail thus levied at the sister University is far more extortionate and exorbitant than that which I called attention to in my first paper as existing at my own University. The "gate fines"—*i.e.*, fines for being out of college after ten o'clock p.m.—are not only a ridiculous anomaly, but become a really serious tax; for not only is a man fined for coming into his own college after ten o'clock, but the host who entertains a number of out-college friends at a "wine," or supper, is fined by his own college so much per head for each one of his guests who leaves the college after the gates are closed. Thus supposing, as is often the case, ten men have been at supper at the rooms of a friend who belongs to another college, each of them is fined sixpence on returning to his own college, while the host is fined *five shillings* by *his* college, being sixpence a head for each guest. In every case, the fine goes into the pocket of the college porter. Surely a more gross and

* Under this head we cannot avoid allusion to the extensive fire losses which have seriously crippled some English offices of late—costing, in at least one case, two millions in two years. We cannot believe that life policies in such offices can be any the safer for their connection with fire. The two risks are totally dissimilar, and are best apart.

absurd piece of extortion than this was never heard of, especially when it is borne in mind that, besides this handsome perquisite, the porter has a fixed salary, and beyond and above both these has a lucrative source of revenue in the "tips" which he expects to receive from every undergraduate in the college at the end of term. All things considered, it would be hard in these degenerate days to find a snigger berth than that of a college porter at Oxford or Cambridge.

There is also another objectionable fine at my own college and University which it escaped me to allude to in my former paper, and that is the fine for not attending Sacrament. On Sacrament Sundays, those who did not intend to remain for the Communion were allowed to leave before the celebration commenced. But the chapel gates were closed, and they found themselves obliged to pass single file through a narrow wicket, on either side of which stood one of the college "markers," with book and pencil to take down the name of every delinquent, and the penalty for thus "cutting Sacrament" was half a crown. Now, if any one had ventured to accuse the college authorities of compelling men to attend Sacrament against their will, they would have indignantly repelled such an accusation, and they would have defended their conduct in this case on the ground that the service was intended especially for those intending to communicate, and that those who had no wish to do so might have kept their necessary chapel—it is compulsory upon undergraduates to attend chapel both morning and evening on Sundays—by attending early morning service. This is true, and a plausible excuse enough as far as it goes; but why should it not have been distinctly stated that the mid-day service was *only* for communicants, and that no others would be admitted? The solemnity of the occasion would not then have been violated by the scandalous and irreverent stampede which took place immediately after the pre-Communion service was over. But so admirable an opportunity for inflicting a fine was too good to be lost; the temptation to fleece the black sheep was too strong to be resisted; and, besides, looking at the matter from a moral and religious point of view, was it not for the good of the souls of these reprobates that their godless rejection of a holy ordinance of the Church should be visited with some punishment? It is always easy to find ex-

cuses for consulting one's own interests. I suppose some £10 in fines was booked on each of these occasions. To whom this fat perquisite went I cannot say; all I know is that it came out of Paterfamilias's pocket; and as it in no way troubled or inconvenienced those whom it was supposed to punish, I fear that, as a warning to evildoers and a penalty against godlessness, the fine was a failure. But then, on the other hand, what a comfortable feeling must have pervaded the pious breasts of those who enjoyed the perquisite! It is so thoroughly delightful, it is so productive of a saintly joy, to feel that duty—plain but unpleasant duty—is bringing its own pecuniary reward! There was a time, no doubt, when all these fines had a meaning. In the days when the Universities were semi-monastic institutions, it was needful to enforce the harshest and most stringent discipline. They were religious nurseries then, and it was only proper that those who were to pass their lives in celibacy, and set an example of self-denial and temperance, should be early trained in the practice of those virtues. It is very different now. A very considerable amount of liberty is considered a wholesome part of University training, as an incentive to young men to cultivate habits of self-guidance and self-control, and as a means of teaching them to act upon their own responsibility. And, therefore, I think it is a scandalous and indefensible piece of extortion and injustice on the part of the college authorities to retain these old fines and penalties now that their use and value as punishments have long become obsolete, merely as a means of extracting money to provide snug perquisites for greedy college parasites.

Whilst Alma Mater shows such a miserly eagerness to avail herself of every possible excuse for squeezing money out of her dear and cherished alumni, it is idle to expect that the tradesmen will not follow suit. What reform can there be outside the colleges until they reform themselves within?

"Pone seram; cohibe, sed quis custodiet ipsos Custodes?"

It is a thought which occurs to every young fellow who thinks at all up at the University, that it is curiously inconsistent with its character as a commonwealth of letters, that the University should countenance distinctions which have no connection whatever with letters or learning. In a republic

of letters, one would have thought there would have been no distinctions but those which are won by talent and scholarship. But a single day in the University is enough to show that the republic of letters is all a sham. A republic, indeed! It is the most arrant despotism ever known, and the two tyrants who hold sway are money and rank. Oh, the toadyism and money-worship that are rampant there! Why, the Universities have the proud distinction of having given birth to a peculiar type of toady—the “tuft-hunter.” Who that has seen the obsequious and painfully polite college tutor take the arm of the young nobleman or fellow-commoner in the “quad,” in full sight of all the men coming from lecture, will ever be at a loss where to look for the most perfect specimen of that peculiarly scholastic type of the genus toady, the tuft-hunter?

Is it worthy of such great educational institutions that wealth should have its distinctive badge in the fellow-commoner, and poverty its distinctive badge in the sizar? Wealth has quite enough influence and power without giving it special academical privileges, and poverty is quite heavily enough weighted in the race without further handicapping it by fastening upon the poor man the stigma of an opprobrious name, and marking him off from the rest by a line of separation which makes him practically a social pariah.

But, after all, it is but waste of energy to be indignant with Alma Mater on this score. All the indignation in the world will never shame her out of her toadyism and money-worship. They are ingrained in her now, I expect, and can never be extracted. But it is worth while considering whether these external signs of the worship of wealth may not have had a great deal to do with the growth of that system of credit, and that general disposition towards extravagance, which are such glaring features of University social life.

That noblemen should wear a distinctive garb may, perhaps, be right enough—if they are regarded as hereditary pillars of the constitution; but that any rich nobody, by merely paying double fees, should be entitled to bedizen himself in gold or silver lace, and enjoy immunities and privileges which are denied to the poorer sons of Alma Mater, is carrying money-worship a little too far. Indeed it is, I am convinced, this open worship of money, of which the University of-

ficials themselves are the high priests, which is at the root of the abuses which I treated of in my last article. When money is the gauge of every man's worth, and when most men are eager to be esteemed and honoured even on that basis of honour and esteem, it is only natural that they should try, at any rate, to keep up the appearance of wealth, and avail themselves of the means to carry out the deception which lie so temptingly ready to their hand in the system of credit. The University dons would suggest this emendation of Pope's line, though in one sense the original reading might still hold good:—

“*Wealth makes the man, the want of it the fellow.*”

It is a recognised fact there that money gives a man a dignity and standing which no moral or intellectual attainments can confer; and Alma Mater offers a premium to rich young idlers to come up and squander a portion of their ample fortune in what is facetiously termed a University *education*. And these young Croesuses set the fashion of luxury and extravagance, which the other undergraduates, in deference to the etiquette of the place, deem it incumbent upon them to follow, no matter into what depths of debt it may lead them.

Oh, Alma Mater—you call yourself a mother of arts and learning! You talk of fostering and cherishing, of guarding and guiding your beloved alumni—of watching over their welfare, and turning them out useful members of society! Bah! who listens to your twaddle? Why, do you know what you are like? You are like a fat old cicerone, whose duty it is to show visitors over some historic old building, and prose away drearily by the hour—the abomination of abominations to intelligent travellers, who don't want her guidance, and won't have it; so they just slip half a crown into her receptive palm, and tell her they will dispense with her services, and be their own guides. She, with a little attempt at bridling-up, and a faint show of standing upon her dignity, finally stows the half-crown away, and, with a reproachful shake of the head at the departing figures of the wilful travellers, sits down resigned. So you sit there in your seat of learning, and we just push our “tips” into your open palm; and you, after an imbecile effort to assert your maternal authority, sit down resigned, with the virtuous reso-

lution of demanding a larger "tip" from us next time. You are paid, and that is enough for you, and that is all you care for, as you drop the coins into your purse, and leer out of your rheumy old eyes! Bah! you are an old humbug, and we are sick of you.

Whilst I am on the subject of money, let me just endeavour to give outsiders a general idea of the ordinary cost of a University education. If you consult the Cambridge Calendar, you will find this table of average expenses.

| <i>Annual.</i> | | | |
|--|-----|----|----|
| | £ | s. | d. |
| Tuition | 18 | 0 | 0 |
| Rooms, rent, &c. | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Attendance, assessed taxes, &c. | 6 | 5 | 0 |
| Coals | 3 | 10 | 0 |
| College payments | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| <i>Cost of Living.</i> | | | |
| Breakfast, dinner, and tea, at 16s. 6d. a week for twenty- five weeks, making the ave- rage three terms' residence in the year | 20 | 12 | 6 |
| Laundress | 5 | 8 | 0 |
| Total | £69 | 2 | 10 |

It is added, "Personal expenses and tradesmen's bills are independent of the place," a vague statement, upon which I leave the reader to place his own construction. When or by whom this absurd table was calculated I cannot tell, nor do I know why it appears year after year in the Calendar, unless to entrap unwary parents into sending up their sons, in the belief that £100 a year will amply suffice to cover the expenses of their University career. It is enough to say that the table is no guide whatever to University expenses.

Unless a scholarship or sizarship be obtained at one of the colleges, Paterfamilias must make up his mind to pay £200 a year for his son's expenses at college—i.e., £200 for the twenty-five weeks which form the academic year; in other words, an allowance of £8 a week. Pretty fair for a young fellow of eighteen, I think. Yet it is almost impossible to keep the expenses within that sum under the present system of University charges. And, indeed, the father who starts his son with an allowance of

£200 may consider himself fortunate if, when the degree is at last gained, he finds that £1,000 has covered the three and a half years' expenditure. The father who reckons his expenditure under that sum runs a very good chance of finding himself grievously disappointed. Now, £8 a week seems a very liberal allowance for a boy who has just left school. I am taking, remember, the ordinary undergraduate now: there are those whose parents allow them double and treble that sum—with them I am not concerned at present. £200 a year, or £8 a week, is recognized as the most common allowance. This, as I say, seems liberal enough; but then there are certain luxuries which the etiquette of the "Varsity" requires every "man" to indulge in. For example, wine—which most of the undergraduates have never been accustomed to at home, and which they will certainly not be able to afford after they leave the University—is considered a necessary part of an undergraduate's ménage. Why it should be so considered, I cannot say; it is a ridiculous and stupid custom, it seems to me, and leads directly to extravagance. The humble beer and glass of toddy to which he will have to confine himself after he leaves college are surely quite enough to whet his whistle, and the whistles of his thirsty comrades, while he is up there. But, granting that wine is indispensable, the wisest plan would surely be for parents themselves to supply their sons with what they consider a sufficient amount, and not allow them to run up enormous bills with University wine merchants. Luxurious living is traditional among undergraduates, and they find it very difficult afterwards to descend to the plain fare which must, for many a long year, take the place of those divine symposia, those ambrosial feasts. It is time enough for men to become gourmands when all other sources of pleasure fail them—when joints are stiff, and more active enjoyment is denied them; and to encourage young men to be epicures is hardly a legitimate branch of University education. A little more simplicity in this respect would make a wonderful difference in the total of a college bill, and considerably lighten the load of expense which falls on the shoulders of that poor, patient beast of burden, Paterfamilias.

In looking over past records of University life, I find that much the same abuses have

existed up there for the last 150 years; and it is amusing to note what desperate but unavailing efforts have been made to correct extravagance and laxity of morals by stringent sumptuary laws. It would appal the boldest undergraduate to go through the statute book, and see what terrible penalties have been enacted, and, being unrepealed, are still in force, to suppress even his most trifling peccadilloes.

Writing of the University in the year 1717, Mr. Edward Miller, serjeant-at-law, says sarcastically that "the University would be very thin if all the statutes de modestia et morum urbanitate were put in force." Even in his time the old laws had fallen into disuse, and were practically obsolete; and I note that he mentions, as a special hardship resulting from the general disregard of old statutes, the weary while the tradesmen were kept waiting both for money and justice when they had any claims upon the University for either. "One sturdy townsman," he says, "sued a master of arts and a considerable tutor for a pair of boots and a pair of shoes; and though he prosecuted his action with all vigour, it was about *seven years* before it came to a sentence, which was at last in favour of the townsman—great intercession and application being often used in the meantime to several vice-chancellors and their deputies."

Well, the tradesmen are having their innings now, and I think they get justice a little too quickly from the modern county court. It is not uncommon for a debtor to receive the first intelligence that his creditor has sued him, from a judgment summons informing him that judgment has gone against him by default, and that he is saddled with all the costs of the action. For little trouble is taken in serving a county court summons. It is left at an address where, perhaps, the debtor has not been residing for months before; and, as I have said, the first intimation of the action he receives is the judgment summons, which *must* be served upon him personally.

It would be well if the judges of the Oxford and Cambridge county courts would inquire a little more closely into the proofs of "service" in the case of summonses taken out against non-resident graduates.

They are redolent of intolerance, those old sumptuary laws, and of course they failed—as all such harsh and mistaken

measures must fail—to remedy the abuses at which they were aimed. It would be a treat, I think, to see the faces of those highly moral gentlemen who framed the statutes prohibiting "daily frequenting of the market and all loitering in the streets," on pain of a fine of five shillings, if they could but be brought back to life just for an hour, to have one look at the "High," or King's Parade! It would be rich, too, to transport the framers of that other statute—which enacts that no scholar shall play at quoits, sword-playing, fencing, dancing, or any such boisterous games—from the nether shades to witness the Boat Race or the athletic sports. How they would stare aghast at the indecorous vagaries of those ancient seats of learning, for which they had done their best to prescribe rules of modesty and decorum! There are fanatics who still believe in the efficacy of sumptuary laws, and would, if they had their way, establish in the University a detestable system of espionage and a hateful ecclesiastical police with inquisitorial powers. A very cursory study of history might teach them the folly of such high-handed measures to reform abuses. They would only scotch the snake, not kill it. And the reaction, which must inevitably follow, would make matters ten times worse than before.

But while I view with strong disfavour all such attempts to make men virtuous by Act of Parliament, I think there is one obvious check to extravagance and idleness at the University which might be advantageously adopted; and that is, by raising the standard of admission, making an entrance examination compulsory at all colleges; and, further, making that examination a pretty stiff one—as stiff, say, as the present "Little Go," which is not a very formidable test of a man's abilities, after all. This would effectually exclude those rich idlers who have done so much to corrupt University society. Let a University career be the reward of at least a little previous industry and perseverance in study. The preparation for admission will necessitate, at any rate, some habits of work beforehand; and these, we may depend upon it, will not die away all at once. At present, there is no bar to the admission of the idlest and most ignorant blockhead in the world. Many colleges have no entrance examination at all; and I remember that, at my own college, the matriculation examina-

tion was a mere farce—a boy of twelve years of age could have passed it with ease; yet there were always several men plucked. They had, however, two more trials allowed them at intervals of a fortnight, each trial easier than its predecessor, so loath were the tutors to lose even such discreditable pupils. The veriest dunce had to them a definite monetary value; and, if he represented nothing else, represented at any rate £18 a year. I am sure that the whole tone of the University would be raised if the examination for admission were made a real test of average knowledge. For the men who would thus be excluded are, as a rule, utterly worthless from every point of view. They contribute nothing either to the intellectual or athletic honour of the University; they merely set an example of lavish and reckless expenditure, which it would be the greatest blessing in the world to the University to be without.

Now that a new and better race of dons has arisen—now that the selfish, indolent, easy-going, self-indulgent old gentleman, who ambled through life like his own sleek cob, has given place to the earnest, thoughtful, liberal-minded man of energy and honesty, we have a right to expect some wise reforms—something conceived in a better and more liberal spirit than those Puritanical old sumptuary laws.

Apropos of those old laws, before I close I may thank my stars that they are obsolete, for among them is one which provides dire pains and penalties against whomsoever shall dare to reveal the secrets of the University to outsiders! Perhaps I should not have been so outspoken had I been liable, for such an offence as I have been committing, to be “suspended and excluded from the master’s degree, and all benefits and honours of the said University,” until I should have “deserved to obtain favour from the said University—or, at least, from the more numerous and discreet part of the University of regents.” I am afraid I should have received scant mercy from those worthy gentlemen, and should hardly have regained their favour on this side the grave.

To those who are wearied by the constant repetition of the title which heads this article, it will be a relief to know that my case is nearly finished. I have only to touch upon one more point—female society at the University—which will occupy my next and concluding paper, and then the eyes of readers

of *ONCE A WEEK* will no longer be pained by what Falstaff would call the “damnable iteration” of “A Case against Alma Mater.”

MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

IN TWO PARTS.—I.

THE fact that the managers of our two opera houses do not intend to give representations of Wagner’s works on a scale as liberal and complete as that on which the operas of Mozart, Meyerbeer, and other writers of the grand opera are put upon the stage would not surprise us. But as the musical public particularly desire to hear “Tannhäuser” and “Lohengrin” at Covent Garden or Drury Lane, it is strange that neither Mr. Mapleson nor Mr. Gye seems likely to consult their wishes. Mr. Edward Dannreuther has worked with the greatest zeal of any amateur of music to get Wagner a hearing in this country; and his paper on this subject, recently read at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, with some slight curtailment, we publish, as the interest felt in this subject quite warrants our doing so.

It is near upon five and twenty years since Richard Wagner and Franz Liszt accomplished some of their most important revolutionary deeds in the realms of instrumental and dramatic music, and the time has come when musical theorists are following in the wake of the great innovators, and are exerting themselves to give a systematic account of their doings. Before attempting to give an insight into the many conflicting theories, opinions, and absurdities that have crystallized around that great bugbear, “The Music of the Future,” it will be well to afford a slight notion of the state of musical matters antecedent to Wagner and Liszt’s revolt. It will be best to do this from two sides: The side of pure instrumental music, which has been far the most prominent in Germany—that is to say, in the entire musical world worth speaking of—since the middle of the last century; and secondly, from the side of music in connection with the drama, that is to say, operatic music generally.

Since the days of Bach and Handel, the progress of musical art has lain almost exclusively within the domains of purely instrumental music. It is true that our great masters have produced an enormous amount of matter for human voices, both with and without accompaniment; and it is not less

true that the art, even the purely instrumental part of it, has received an immense impulse through its connection with the stage. Still the achievements of the great instrumental school, from Bach and his sons, through Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, to Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, constitute the genuine triumphs of the art, without fear of injuring Rossini, and all his friends who have devoted their talents to the manufacture of tunes for Italian and French singing birds.

If we follow the course of the development of instrumental music from Haydn to Beethoven, we perceive a gradual development of form; from a regular production for the market, to the achievement of a lofty ideal, upon which none but purely artistic considerations are allowed to have any influence. In Haydn's earlier days, the greater number of Austrian, Bohemian, and Hungarian noblemen kept their private bands. A similar custom has obtained in Russia up to the recent emancipation of serfs, and may be still in vogue here and there. Those who were unable to support a complete band, kept at least a string quartette, or a couple of wind instrument players. Paterfamilias played the violin, or the flute, or the violoncello together with his retainers, and accompanied his daughters playing on the cembalo.

It was for this sort of amateur gatherings that composers produced the incredible mass of chamber music, which astonishes the student. It is to these *réunions* of dilettanti that the enormous number of duets, trios, quartettes, for string and wind instruments, the endless sets of variations for the piano-forte, the serenades, cassaziones, suites for small bands, &c., resembling one another like eggs in a basket, owe their origin. The composers furnished what their patrons could play easily; and thus a conventional form and style for compositions of this character was easily developed, and soon carried to a state of relative perfection.

But the very great diffusion of this class of music, and the ever-increasing demand for it, brought into play an element which, though it carried with it the germs of degeneracy, yet saved the conventional forms of chamber music from entire stagnation—I mean the *virtuose* element. A number of professed players, travelling virtuosi, made their influence felt from one end of Europe to the other; and it was in consequence of

their increased professional skill—of their safe and sure mastery over all technical difficulties—that composers such as Mozart, animated with a desire to fly at higher game, could venture to give bolder expression to their musical dreams.

At last Beethoven was enabled to clear the entire domains of dilettantism at a bound, and to escape the stifling atmosphere of amateur tastes and wishes. From the beginning of Beethoven's second period—from the *Sinfonia Eroica*, or the *Waldstein Sonata*, or the *Rasoumouffsky quartettes*—we may date the decay and death of dilettantism. These works are absolutely beyond the reach of players who cannot devote an entire life to their instruments, and they form of necessity the centre of that great circle round which the whole musical world of our day gyrates.

With Beethoven, instrumental music rises to a perfectly ideal sphere. He has got rid of all and every conventionality of form and diction. He makes every technical detail subservient to the expression of his poetical idea. He gives himself no trouble as regards difficulties of execution, provided there are no technical impossibilities. He finishes his work as best he can, without consulting the desires or tastes of his executants, or even of his audience. The outlines of musical form, such as they have been bequeathed to him by his predecessors, he cannot be said to have either obliterated or strained. He expanded them, and turned them to account for the expression of intense emotions. Every work is a distinct individual, whose connection with the species may be and is traceable, though at first sight it appears to be infinitely removed from the parent stock.

The gist of the whole matter lies in the fact that since Beethoven, it has been the desire of all thinking and aspiring musicians to construct their music upon a poetical basis. Now, the tendency towards the expression of some definite poetical idea by musical means is the characteristic of all so-called "Music of the Future," and such a tendency has made itself felt more and more clearly in the works of Beethoven's successors: Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner. The unlimited powers of the art for emotional expression, and for this only, are being more and more universally recognized; and we are every day moving farther from the old standpoint of

vague juggling with sweet sounds in stereotyped forms.

A sonata or a string quartette of the old type was built somewhat like an ordinary Victorian house. From the portico and hall of the first theme, you were led up a commonplace staircase of runs and passages to the second theme, with its feminine drawing-room air, whence it was easy to find your way into more or less insignificant accessory rooms, or to descend again into this or that musical pantry.

Beethoven has not in every instance thought fit to give a distinct clue to the poetical ideas which prompted, or at least ran parallel with, his musical production. He has, however, in his most important works done so; and in the records of his conversations with friends and pupils, many indications in a similar direction are to be found. Thus among his symphonies may be instanced the "Eroica," the "Pastoral," and above all the ninth. Among his sonatas, the "Pathétique," "L'absence et le retour." Among his overtures, "Coriolan," "Egmont," and the three great "Leonoras."

His followers, on the list of German instrumental composers, have carried the principle still farther. Thus, to mention an extreme example, and one most familiar, Mendelssohn, in his overture entitled "Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage," follows a poem of Goethe's, line for line, picture for picture. His other concert overtures, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Fingal," "Melusine," all give most vivid impressions of the ideas their titles indicate. Rob. Schumann has in several of his larger works, such as the overtures to "Manfred," "Faust," "Julius Cæsar," succeeded in giving the emotional essence of the poetical works indicated by the titles in the musician's language; and hundreds of his smaller pianoforte pieces have characteristic superscriptions indicative of the precise pictures, images, and feelings that engrossed the composer's mind during his work. In Berlioz's Symphonies, and Liszt's "Poèmes Symphoniques," the new method has reached its climax, and probably in many cases both composers have overstepped and overstrained the limits and capacities of musical art. Both offer definite, and sometimes very lengthy, programmes to their musical work.

Berlioz has attempted to make a symphony of Shakspeare's "Romeo and Juliet," and of the fourth Canto of Byron's "Childe

Harold." Liszt has reproduced poems by Victor Hugo, Schiller, meditations by Lamartine, scenes from Dante's "Divina Commedia," &c. Many of these works, marvellously interesting though they be, and surprisingly ingenious and perfect in all technical detail, are a little unpalatable. We get no total and complete impression from them. These extreme cases of programme music, then, form one phase of the matter, and are known, and sometimes ridiculed, under the sobriquet of "Music of the Future."

The other, the main phase, is that represented by Richard Wagner. Wagner, in constructing a musical drama, delineates the characters after the fashion of a great poet, and makes use of music as the ultimate means of poetical expression. In Wagner's dramas, the significance given to music is indicative of the character the art will attain in no very distant future.

It is a common case in all arts and sciences, that a man of genius has some intuitive insight—sees his way by chance, as it were, through a maze of facts—is perfectly right in his intuition; yet, while seeking plausible reasons for it, such as shall make it palatable to others, hits upon an explanation, only partially true, or mayhap altogether false. His intuitions may for all that be very profound, and perfectly right. Some such intuitive rediscovery of forgotten truth, long lost sight of, we owe to Wagner, and the reasons he has in his voluminous writings given for it are the cause of all the storms that have devastated the musical world for the last quarter of a century.

Wagner is a poet and dramatist by nature and profession; a very different thing from a mere musician, let it be remembered. His artistic talents developed themselves in immediate contact with the musical stage. At starting, he was equipped with a sound classical education over and above his enormous specifically musical and dramatic gifts. Possessing an ardent imagination, that most vividly reproduced the scenes and sentiments of ancient Greek and Elizabethan drama, a fiery soul steeped in the Titanic marvels of Beethoven's symphonies and Bach's fugues, is it to be wondered at that he should have found the dreary everyday routine of operatic banalities, the platitude and puerility of all operatic doings, utterly unbearable?

To us, who judge after the fact, it appears

most natural and inevitable that he should have attempted a realization of an artistic ideal, made up of these various elements, and intending to combine the separate and isolated perfections of both into one glorious whole; a dramatic whole, in which the poet should be allowed to delineate his characters in accordance with the laws of his art, without making the slightest concession to the musician for the sake of operatic or any other conventionalities; and again, a dramatic whole, in which the musician should be able to give unfettered expansion to the supreme powers for emotional expression, peculiar to his art.

Wagner saw the possibilities for such a form clearly before him; and long before he attempted to find plausible reasons in support of his intuition, long before he began to speculate on the subject, he tried to embody his ideal in living works for the musical stage. We need only mention "*Der fliegende Holländer*," "*Tannhäuser*," and "*Lohengrin*," which were all written, and for the most part publicly performed, before a word of his theoretical endeavours saw the light.

He spent the earlier part of his life conducting operas at small theatres in second-rate towns, like Würzburg, Magdeburg, Riga.

During his conductorship at Dresden, from 1843 to 1849, he had striven most ardently, but in vain, to raise the general standard of things operatic. After the revolution of '49, finding himself entirely isolated from all musical and dramatic doings, a refugee at Zürich, he determined to give at least a written version of the dramatic and musical ideal which he had formed for himself, and which he then saw no hope of actually realizing on the stage. He had received the strongest inducements to account for the stagnation of the musical stage in Germany, by the position it occupies in modern society. It was folly, undoubtedly, to entertain a hope of entirely reversing the position of an institution, which aims almost exclusively at providing diversion and amusement for a population that loves pleasure, because it is bored, and at securing the pecuniary gain necessary to cover the expenses of exhibitions calculated to serve such a purpose. It was folly to think of substituting for this an ideal tendency to raise the minds of the people from the vulgar interests of daily life, and to enable them to comprehend and to view with due adoration the

highest and the most significantly beautiful that the human mind is capable of grasping.

TABLE TALK.

WE have had our faith in articles bought and sold shaken rudely enough lately, but we still held on to an old-fashioned belief that a wedding ring with a Hall mark upon it was gold. And not only gold, but of the specified number of carats of pure gold stamped on it. We supposed that any gold article sold by a goldsmith and stamped with the Hall mark, 18 carats, contained eighteen parts of pure gold with six parts of alloy; the said alloy being necessarily added to the gold to harden the mass, and make the article wear well. We regret to say this innocent creed has received a severe shock. We learn that on Saturday, the 5th of April, a considerable number of gentlemen connected with the jewellery trade, including the President of the Pawnbrokers' Association and principal pawnbrokers in the metropolis, attended a conference at the establishment of a jeweller in Bond-street, for the purpose of inspecting a large quantity of spurious Hall-marked jewellery, with a view of proving that the process of Hall-marking adopted by the Goldsmiths' Company is no protection to the public in the purchase of what they are led to believe to be a guarantee that the article so purchased is genuine. These gentlemen met in their own interests chiefly, but the public who purchase what ought to be gold articles have no reason to regret that this conference was held, as the facts disclosed were unusually startling—sanded sugars, "doctored" teas, bacon with "teacupfuls of maggots" dropping from it in transitu, and Cayenne pepper made of red lead and brickdust, sinking for the time into comparative insignificance when placed side by side with the products of the East-end working jeweller.

LET US PONDER upon the curious facts disclosed at this conference. A large collection of these sham gold ornaments was produced. To the eye they were pleasing enough: it was in the trifling matter of intrinsic value that they proved deficient. This meeting of experts came to the conclusion that the public are subjected to the most astounding frauds even with respect to that which is looked upon as jewellery of

first-class character, and for which the highest price is paid; and it must be admitted that the facts support this view. Among the articles of bijouterie exhibited were a lady's elastic neck-chain, bearing the Hall mark as 18-carat gold, the value of which, if genuine, would be £11, which proved to be composed mainly of silver and red lead; a pawnbroker had lent £6 10s. upon it, and when assayed its intrinsic value was found to be 22s.: a discovery hardly more alarming to the victimised pawnbroker than to the public. A chain was produced on which, being Hall-marked, a pawnbroker was induced to lend £7, valued at 36s. Another chain, every link of which was stamped as 18-carat gold, and on which £10 had been lent by a pawnbroker, was found on being assayed to be but 11½. Other interesting items were gold rings Hall-marked, filled inside with cement. But the most ingenious effort of the operator was displayed, perhaps, in the production of a brooch, the outer casing of which was thin gold and Hall-marked: it was filled with copper, exactly fitting the mould of the brooch. The proposed remedy by which this fraudulent system is to be stopped is for the authorities at Goldsmiths' Hall to refuse to mark any article still incomplete. At present they will stamp any portion of an article submitted, and therefore their stamp has lost its value; for 18-carat impressed on one link of a chain is only a guarantee of the quality of that link, and has no connection with all the other links over which it is made to cast a halo of purity. No doubt the officials who Hall-mark gold articles will look into the matter after this exposure.

THE FOLLOWING were old Easter customs: Pace Eggs, given at this season—very much more general in France than with us, though the practice is gaining ground in England also—written Paste, Pasch, and Pask: Pasch, from paschal, is probably the true spelling; the customs of eating tansy pudding, baked custards—a Norfolk custom; “clipping,” or surrounding the church by a chain of children hand-in-hand; “sugar cupping”—carrying sugar to a dripping well, in a cup, at Easter, and drinking the sweet syrup thus made—Derbyshire custom; the giving away of cakes, bread, and Easter doles to the poor at this festival, are a few among many ancient customs formerly practised at this season, some of which have descended

to our own times. It is with regret we observe the decay of these old customs and practices, the loss of the knowledge called “folk lore,” and general indifference to the doings of his grandsires shown by the English peasant of the present day. He seems to have lost much of the curious countryside knowledge possessed by his forefathers. He knows nothing of the properties of the plants, or habits of the wild creatures that he sees every day. He goes not forth “to cull simples,” for, if he did, he would hardly know what to do with them. He has become, to a large extent, a machine, requiring to be supplied largely with bad beer to get up the steam on; and when it is up, this peasant of to-day works hard enough, but with slight skill, and performs only one sort of work. Set him another, and he is out of his element completely. We fear the intelligence of the peasant class is less than it was; and we believe this decadence may, to a considerable extent, be traced to the ignorance of and contempt for old legends, stories, and customs felt by the modern farm labourer. Some few counties, at the extreme ends of the land, still retain their old folk-lore and simple learning.

THE FOLLOWING has, at least, the benefit of being perfectly true in all its particulars: An officer of the —th was quartered, a few years ago, in the height of the Fenian disturbance, at Killarney, where the troops were accommodated, as is by no means unusual in Ireland, in the workhouse. Being in search of a new sensation (and Killarney is, like Switzerland or the Tyrol, very dull in winter), he bethought himself of paying a tailor's bill, addressing, of course, from “The Workhouse, Killarney.” Back came the answer by return of post: The tailor was pained to see so good a customer reduced so low; he could not think of accepting the amount due to him, which he begged to return; and, if a ten-pound note would be of any service, he would be most happy to send it. Surely this is a new point of view from which to take that long-suffering race.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 278.

April 26, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A. Nobel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XXXVII.



E have not had a Chorus for a long time," said Venn. "All these excitements have been too much for us. Sit down, Arthur. Jones, consider this a regular night."

"I have been reading," said Jones, presently, "with a view to understanding the great secret of success, some of the poetry of the period. And I beg to submit to the Chorus, a ballad done in the most approved fashion of our modern poets. May I read it? It is called 'The Knightly Tryste,' or, if you will, 'My Ladye's Bidding,' which is more poetical:—

'Between the saddle and the man,
Ah me! red gleams of sunlight ran;
He only, on his Arab steed,
Left all the streaming winds behind.
Signed, "Well it were, in time of need,
A softer place than this to find."

The twinkling milestones at his side
Flashed for a moment as he passed;
Small thought had he of joy or pride,
Groaned only, "This can never last."
And more and more the red light ran
Between the saddle and the man.

"Woe worth the day," he gasped by times,
"My lady fair this fancy took;
And devil take her prattling rhymes
About the willows and the brook.
For this I suffer what I can"—
Between the saddle and the man.

Still rode the knight: the dewy beads
Stood on his brow, but on he spurred;
Ere compline bell doth ring, it needs
He meet the lady by her word.
And great discomfort then began
Between the saddle and the man.

There came a moment—o'er a gate,
Five-barred, close shut, the destrier flew;
He also—but his knees, too late,
Clutched only mosses wet with dew.
Ah, me! the ever-lengthening span
Between the saddle and the man."

Jones read and looked round for applause. None followed.

"It won't do, Jones," said Venn—"it won't do. You had better stick to the old school. The grotesque and the unreal won't last. Write for posterity, if you must write poetry."

"I don't care so much for posterity as I did," said Jones. "I want things that pay. Now, I really think an able editor ought to give something for those lines."

"Low and grovelling aim! Look at me—I write for nothing but the praise of my fellow-countrymen, as soon as I can get published."

"I sometimes think," Jones continued, "of taking up the satirical line. Are you aware that there is not such a thing as a satirist living? We want a Boileau. The nation asks for a man of sense. Something must be done soon."

For once Jones looked melancholy.

"What is it, Jones?" asked Venn. "More disappointments. Remember the banquet of life, my boy?"

"I do," said Jones, with an effort to smile. "In the words of Hannah More—

'For bread and cheese and little ease,
Small thanks, but no repining,
Still o'er the sky they darkling lie—
Clouds, with no silver lining.'

Come," he went on, "the Chorus is unusually dull and silent. I will sing you a song made for the occasion :—

'I am an unfortunate man,
Bad luck at my elbow doth sit,
Let me tell how my troubles began,
If only my feelings permit.

The spoon that my young lips adorn'd
In infancy's hour was of wood,
No freaks then of fortune I mourn'd,
And for pap it was equally good.

To school I was sent, and the first day
I was caned with the rest by mistake;
But each morning that followed, the worst day
Seemed still in my annals to make.

For I laughed when I should have been weeping,
I cried when I ought to have smiled;
And the painful results still are keeping
Their memory green in this child.

The other boys sinned at their leisure,
They could do what they liked and escape;
But I, for each illicit pleasure,
Still found myself in a new scrape.

Now in London I linger, and sadly
Get shoved on my pathway by fate.
Hope dances before me, and madly
Shows fruits that are only a bait.

For I am an unfortunate man;
But fate, which has taken the rest,
Has given, to console when she can,
Good spirits still left in my breast.'

"That's not very good, Jones," said Lynn. "What has put you into this dejected and miserable frame, unfit for the society of a decent and philosophical Chorus? First you read a bad poem, and then you sing a comic song."

"A letter I got this morning," he answered, with a groan. "Let me talk, you fellows, and I'll tell you a story. Call it a vision if you like—a vision of two lives :—

"The two lives were once one. They thought the same thoughts and had the same ambitions. They had the same chances, they won the same successes, dreamed the same dreams. No two friends were ever so close, for the two minds were one, and dwelt in the same body. I saw in my vision that there came a time—the boy was grown almost to the age of manhood—when the two separated. It was at Oxford that this disunion first took place. And in my vision

it seemed to me that the one which remained in the boy was as myself, and the other—that other self which I might have been."

Jones paused, and pondered for a few moments, with grave face.

"Yes, I—that is, the one that remained behind—was seized with a kind of madness of vanity. All my noble dreams, all my thoughts of what might be, gave way to a desire to amuse. I, that is, of course—"

"Go on saying I, without apology," said Venn.

"Well, I succeeded in amusing the men of my college. I succeeded as an actor—I think I was a good mimic. I sang, I made verses, I wrote little plays and acted them. I went every day to wines, suppers, and breakfasts. I was, of course, tremendously poor; and, like most poor idiots, did no reading whatever. Meantime, my old friend was very differently occupied. I used to see his calm, quiet face—like mine in features, but different in expression—in hall and chapel. He was a student. He came up to Oxford with ambitions and hopes that I shared; but he kept them, and worked for them. Mine, with the means of realizing them, I had thrown away. I used to look at him sometimes, and ask myself if this was the friend who had once been the same as myself, like the two branches of an equation in Indeterminate Co-efficients."

"Jones," said Venn, "don't be flowery, pray don't. We are not mathematical men."

"The time came when we were to go into the schools. I, my friends, in my vision, was plucked. He, in my vision, got a Double First. Curiously enough, in reality, I was plucked in Greats—for divinity. However, after this we took paths even more divergent. He stayed behind to try for a Fellowship, which he easily got. I went up to London to try to get my daily bread in any way, however humble. He entered at the bar—it had always been our ambition to become Fellows, and to enter at the bar—I became a drudge to an army cram coach, who paid me just enough to keep me going.

"He, too, a year or two later, came to London. How long is it? I think it is ten years since we took our degrees—and read law. Presently he was called—I saw his name in the Law List—and began to get practice. I, like a stone, neither grew nor moved.

"The time goes on; but the two lives are

separated, never again to meet. He is on the road to fortune and fame. He will make his mark on the history of his country. He will—that is, after all, the cruelest part of the vision—he will marry Mary. For while the boy was growing into manhood, there came to live in the village where his father, the vicar, lived, a retired officer, with a little daughter eight years younger than the boy. The boy, who had no playfellows in the village, took to the child, and became a sort of elder brother to her. And, as they grew up, the affection between the two strengthened. Mary was serious beyond her years, chiefly from always associating with her seniors. When she was twelve and the boy eighteen, she could share his hopes and could understand his dreams. She looked on him as a hero. Like all women with those they love, she could not see his faults; and when he disappointed all their expectations, and came back from the grand University that was to make so much of him, disgraced instead of honoured, loaded with debt instead of armed with a Fellowship, she it was who first forgave him.

"He could not forgive himself. He handed her over mentally to his old friend, and left her."

"But he will see her again," said Arthur.

"I think never. He has had his chance, that would have made them both happy, and he threw it away. My friend, however, who must be making a very large income by this time at the Chancery bar, who writes critical papers in big words in the *Fortnightly*, whose book on something or other connected with the law is quoted by judges—he will doubtless marry her, and then they will be happy. But I—I mean the ego of my vision—shall go on struggling with the world, and rejoicing over small sacrifices, resigned to great disappointments, till the end of the chapter. I shall contemplate the visionary happiness of my alter ego—with Mary, whom I shall never see again. He will be Lord Chancellor; and, if I live long enough, when I die I shall think of the great works that he has done, and thank God for his excellent gift of a steady purpose and a clear brain."

Jones was silent for a few minutes.

"You were talking about women the other night—three months ago. It makes me angry to hear theories of women. I beg your pardon, Venn, for criticising your trumpet-noses; and yours, Lynn, for getting

savage over your world of the future. Women are what men make them; and if my Mary had married the future Lord Chancellor there would have been no nobler woman in the world, as there is now none more tender-hearted and forgiving. But—oh, dear me!—if women are frivolous, it is because they have nothing to do. To make them work is to unsex them; to put them through a Cambridge course of mathematics is so ludicrously absurd in its uselessness, that we need no vision of an impossible future world to show us its folly."

"And suppose, Jones," said Arthur—"only suppose that Mary marries the 'I' of your dream."

"I can't suppose it. He cannot drag her down to his own level."

"But she may raise him to hers."

Jones sighed. In his vision of the two lives he had revealed the story of his own—which Venn already partly knew; and the dignity of sorrow for a moment sat like a crown on his forehead. But he shook it off, and turning round with a cheerful smile, adjusted his spectacles, and concluded his observations.

"My own verses again—

'Gone is the spring with wings too light,
The hopeful song of youth is mute,
The sober tints displace the bright,
The blossoms all are turned to fruit.
I, like a tree consumed with blight,
Fit only for the pruner's knife,
Await the day, not far away,
Which asks the harvest of a life.'

And, for the past is surely gone,
The coming evil still unseen,
I think of what I might have won,
And fancy things that should have been.
And so in dreams by summer streams,
While golden suns light every sheaf,
I take her hand, and through the land,
My love makes all the journey brief."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MADAME DE GUYON sought her son's house at noon the next day. She was ill with a long night's anxiety, and her face, usually so calm, looked troubled and haggard.

Philip was at home, and would see her.

The moment, long looked for, was come at last, and she trembled so much that she could hardly mount the steps of the door. He was sitting in the dismantled room of the little cottage at Notting-hill, but rose to receive his visitor.

She drew her thick veil more closely over

her face, and stood looking at her own son with a thousand emotions in her breast.

Her own son—her Philip! A man now, whom she had last seen a child of four years old, when she took him out of his cot at Fontainebleau. A tall and shapely man, with a face like that of George Durnford, only darker, and eyes that she knew for her own—large, deep, lustrous. She gazed at him for a few moments without speaking or moving, for her heart was too full.

Philip set a chair for her.

"Madame de Guyon?" he asked, looking again at the card. "May I ask what gives me the honour of a visit from—I presume you are the lady whose name—"

"Yes; I am the singer.

"I come," she went on, with an effort, "from your wife."

Philip changed colour.

"Your wife, Philip Durnford, whom you drove away from you three weeks ago. You will be sorry to learn that she is very ill—that she has been dangerously ill."

"Tell me," he stammered; "she is not—not dead?"

"No; grief does not kill."

"Where is she?"

"She is at present under the charge of Miss Venn, the sister of her guardian."

The old jealousy flamed up again in his heart.

"Then she may stay there. She always loved him better than me. I hardly understand, however, what my private affairs have to do with Madame de Guyon."

"I will tell you presently. First, let me plead for this poor girl."

"I am, of course, obliged to listen to all that you have to say."

"I know the whole story, the pitiful, shameful story. I know how, influenced by that bad man, you went through a form of marriage which is illegal; how you gambled away your money; how, when you were ruined at last, you let her go from your doors, with more than the truth—more than the cruel truth—ringing in her ears, disgraced and ashamed."

"More than the truth?"

"Yes, more; for the man was once an ordained minister of his own church, and the illegality consisted only in the place where he married you. Philip Durnford, she is your wife."

He answered nothing.

"I do not ask you to take her back.

That cannot be yet. I say only, remove the doubt that may exist; and, as soon as she is strong enough, make her yours in the eye of the law as well as of God."

"Why do *you* come here? What have you to do with me?"

She laid her hand upon his arm.

"Philip Durnford, for the love of all that you hold sacred, promise me to do this. Do not tell me that you—you—of all men in this wide world, purposely deceived the girl and are not repentant. Oh, Philip—Philip!"

He started. Why should this woman call him by his Christian name? Why should she throw back her veil, and look at him with her full black eyes filled with tears?

"You *had* married her. You meant to marry her. Do not let me believe you to be utterly base and wicked. It cannot be—it would break my heart. Do this, if only to undo some of the past. Then let her stay on with her friends—deserted but not disgraced. Think of it, think of it. The girl was innocent and ignorant. She knew nothing of the world—nothing but what one man had taught her. She had no circle of friends, no atmosphere of home to teach her what life means. She fell into your hands. You loved her—I know you loved her—"

"She never loved me."

"I want to move your heart, Philip Durnford. Think of those in the world who love you, to whom your honour and good name are dear."

"There is no one in the world who loves me; not one to whom my honour and good name are dear."

She sighed, and went on—

"There must be a way to touch your heart. Think of the days you had her with you—men have said that for the sake of those early days, when their wives were to them as angels, they love them for the rest of their lives, long after they have found them women, full of faults, and lower than themselves—when you read that poor child's thoughts, bared before you, and you only—when out of all her thoughts there was not one that she was not ready to confess to you—when you took her out of the solitude of maidenhood, and taught her the sweet mystery of companionship. Philip Durnford, can the Church devise any form of words, any holy ceremony, any oaths or sacra-

ments that ought to be more binding than these things? Can any man have memories of greater tenderness, innocence, and purity than you have of poor Laura? Not a common, untaught girl, of whom you might have been tired in a week; but a girl full of all kinds of knowledge, trained and taught. No one knows the story but Mr. Venn and myself, and—and the other man. The fault may be repaired."

"Arthur knows it, Madeleine knows it, all the world knows it by this time. We waste time in words. I loved her—I love her no longer. I am ashamed for my folly, ashamed, if you will, of the evil temper which made me tell her all. If no one knows, why not let things go on as they are? We are both free."

"You are neither of you free; you are bound to each other. Since her departure, you have obtained possession of Arthur Durnford's estate."

"My estate, if you please. I was prepared to prove it mine in a court of law."

"I think not, because I could have prevented it. The estate is not yours by any legal claim."

"Upon my word, Madame de Guyon," said Philip, "you appear to know a great deal about our family history."

"I do know a great deal."

"But I prefer not to discuss the details with you. I return to what I said before. Let things past be forgotten."

"They can never be forgotten."

He waved his hand impatiently.

"Let us dismiss the subject. And now, Madame de Guyon, pray gratify my curiosity by telling me how you became mixed up in the affair at all."

"Let me say one word more."

"Not one word. I have, I confess, those qualms of regret which some people attribute to conscience. I am extremely sorry that I have made her unhappy. I do not justify any part of my conduct. Mr. MacIntyre did, it is true, endeavour to persuade me that the marriage was legal. I was madly in love, and tried to believe him. Of course it was not legal. This is not a thing that can be said and unsaid. It is a fact. Facts are stubborn things, as you know. The history of her life, together with the overpowering affection she has for the other man, are not calculated to make me desirous of turning into an indissoluble contract

what was really no contract at all. If she wants money——"

"She would die rather than take money from you."

"In that case I think there is nothing—really nothing—more to be said."

"Oh, Philip Durnford! is Heaven's wrath——"

"Come, Madame de Guyon—let us not go into theology. We met; I loved her; I deceived her; was partly deceived myself. I did not meet with any love from her. I lost my money on the turf. I lost my temper with her. We quarrel. She goes away; I sit down and do—nothing. The religious part of the matter concerns me only. Religious matters do not trouble my head much. I am a man of the world, and take things as I find them. Things are mostly bad, and men are all bad. *Que voulez vous?*"

Good heavens! And this man—this libertine—was her own son, and she was sitting there listening in silence!

But the time was come to speak.

"I cannot believe you are speaking what you think. You cannot be so bitter against the world."

"Perhaps I have cause."

"You have not, Philip Durnford. I know your whole history—yes, from your childhood. There are few alive—unless it be that man, MacIntyre—who know the secret of your birth."

"There, at least, I have no reason to be ashamed. My mother was married to my father."

She bent her face forward, and was silent for a moment.

"Suppose she was not?" she murmured.

"But she was. I have legal proofs. They are in my desk."

He grew impatient.

"What is this? What does it mean? You come to me, knowing all about me; you interfere in my most private relations; you ask me to do things. Tell me, I ask again, what it means?"

"I will tell you," she said. "It is a bitter thing to tell—it is a bitter time to have to tell it. I have prayed and hoped for five and twenty years, and now I find you—ah, me!—so changed from the Philip of my dreams."

His face grew white and his hand shook, for a strange foreboding seized him. But he said nothing.

"There was once," she went on, the tears falling fast through her veil—"there was once a rich man and a poor handmaiden. He was kind and generous, and she loved him. They had a son. The time came when the wickedness and folly were to cease. He married, and sent her away—not cruelly, not with harsh words, as you sent Laura away, but kindly and considerately. She knew it must come. She was one of the inferior race, with the old slave blood in her veins. The English gentleman could never marry her, and she knew it all along. She could hope for nothing but his kindness for a time, and look for nothing but a separation. She was ignorant and untaught. She felt no degradation. That was to come afterwards—to last through all her life. Her lover practised no deception, made her no false promises."

"Go on," he said, hoarsely, when she stopped.

"He married. The mulatto girl went away. With his money she learned to sing. She is living now, rich and of good name. No one knows her past. Philip Durnford, she never married your father, and you are her son."

She raised her veil, and looked him straight in the face. He gazed at her, white and scared.

"And you?"

She fell at his feet, crying—

"Oh, Philip—Philip! I am your guilty mother. Forgive me—forgive me!"

And she waited for his words of love and forgiveness.

Alas! none came. After a while he raised her, and placed her in a chair.

His lips moved, but he could not speak. When he did his voice was hard and harsh.

"You say that you are my mother. I must believe you. That I am still illegitimate? That, too, I must believe. The letters and church register—"

"They are forgeries."

"They are forgeries—I believe that, too. Arthur and I have been tricked and cheated. And so, what next?"

She did not answer.

"See, now, I am an unnatural son, perhaps; but I am going to take a common sense view of the matter. Let everything be as it was before. For all these years I have had no mother. I cannot now—not yet at least, feel to you as I should. Go

to Arthur—I, too, will write to him—tell him what you please. If I were you I should tell him nothing. And let us part. I am ruined in fortune and unhappy in every relation of life. But we should neither of us be happier if I were to go home with you and fall into false raptures of filial love. I am unkind, perhaps; but I am trying not to deceive you in any respect. My mother, we have met once. We are not acting a play, and I cannot fall into your arms and love you all at once. I am what my life has made me. I belong to another world—different to yours. I have my habits, my prejudices, my opinions—all bad, no doubt, but I have them. Let me go on my road. Believe me, with such a son you would be miserable. Let us go on keeping our secret from the world. No one shall know that Madame de Guyon has a son at all, far less such a son as myself."

For all answer she threw her arms round his neck, and kissed him again and again. The tears came into his eyes; and for a moment his heart softened, and he kissed her cheek. Then the frost of selfishness fell upon him again, and he grew hard and cruel.

"Let us part," he said.

"Philip," she moaned, "God punishes me very hard. But it cannot be that you should suffer for my faults. God grant only that you never feel the agony and suffering you have caused two women who love you."

"The agony and suffering," he answered, lightly, "may be put at the door of our modern civilization. I am sure you will both feel, after a while, that I have acted for the best. Let us part and be friends. Sometimes, I will come and see you."

"I am your mother still. You can say and do nothing that I would not forgive. When your heart is softened you will come back to me. Stay"—she bent forward with fixed eyes as of one who looks into the future—"I feel it. I see it. The time is not far off when you will lie in my arms and cry for shame and sorrow. I cannot make it all out. It is my dream that comes again and again. I see the place—it looks like George's room. And now—now, all is dark." She closed her eyes, and then looked up with her former expression. "And now, farewell—Laura is my daughter."

He held out his hand. She drew her face to his, and kissed him on the brow. Then she let down her veil, and went away.

Hour after hour passed, but Philip still sat in the desolate room whence he had driven away the angels of his life.

PAN-TEUTONISM.

"Ein ganzes Deutschland soll es sein."

WE have all heard of Pan-Hellenism. Indeed, there was something of the kind even in ancient Greece. It did not mean that all Greece ought to be under one Government; for her inhabitants carried the love of autonomy and decentralization to excess, as it seems to us. Even the ideal of French Communists or the status of Swiss Federals would have fallen far short of the aspirations of an Athenian patriot in the normal days of Greek liberty. It was no more than a vivid sense of the sentimental bond which consisted in descent from a common ancestor—the mythical hero, Hellen—and the possession of a common language. There was almost nothing actively political in it.

But Pan-Hellenism, as a modern term, calls up visions of the Greek War of Independence, of Lord Byron and Mavrocordati, of the agitation which terminated in our cession of the Protectorate of the Ionian Isles. Further, to all who have visited the East, it suggests the use of much impassioned language about the recovery of Constantinople, the restoration of Santa Sophia to Christian worship, the delivery of Heaven knows how many Hellenes from the brutal despotism of an effete Asiatic power, &c. It may be added, that some who have had a little experience of Greek as contrasted with Turkish rule will naturally understand Pan-Hellenism to mean the ad libitum extension of brigandage over regions where at present the strong, though clumsy, hand of the Turkish executive has reduced it to a vanishing quantity. In short, Pan-Hellenism, if not a very successful, is, as far as it goes, an actively political principle.

Why has it been able to achieve so little? Why does it show so little immediate prospect of achieving more? We are not concerned now to write its history in full, and must be content with briefly indicating the reply to these questions. That we have named it at all is because it is the oldest title of the kind, and therefore ought to illustrate the others. Its weak points may be stated as follows:—First, there is considerable doubt as to the proportion of Hellenic blood

in the veins of those who obey—or disobey—King George. We can most of us remember, no doubt, the photographs which were to be seen everywhere of the heads of the Greek brigands who became so unhappily notorious a few years ago. They did not strike us at the first blush as being lineal descendants of Xenophon or Alcibiades. On the other hand, the readers of "Eöthen" will remember the eloquent praises of the Greek faces at Smyrna. It is not my experience of Smyrna, I must say. But I believe the fact to be that there are two well-marked and distinct types among the modern Greeks. One resembles the ancient ideal. It is often handsome—too frequently, with the *beauté du diable*. The other is one of the least civilized of all European faces. It may be questioned whether the Albanian—the Skipetar, as he calls himself—is not more Hellenoid than many who now call themselves Hellenes, though he be but the descendant of the barbarous Thracians. But it is to be feared that Pan-Hellenism, while opening the door to many non-Hellenes, would rudely shut it in the face of some of her legitimate children. I believe some of the truest descendants of the ancient Greeks are to be found in the island of Mitylene, among the Mohammedan population; and Mr. W. G. Palgrave described to me a colony of undoubtedly genuine Hellenes near Trebizond, who are most fervent disciples of Islam.

Let us now glance for a moment at Pan-Slavism. The word is an engine of State policy in Russia, an object of patriotic detestation in Poland, and a sound of fear in Austro-Hungary. Russia claims to be—or some of her admirers claim for her that she is—the personification and protectress of the Slavonic element. It cannot be supposed that she has, up to the present moment, succeeded in persuading the bulk of the Poles—in reality, the most typical Slavonic people—to take up with this view. True, we hear from time to time of one or another Polish patriot adopting it, returning from exile, and taking, it may be, high office under the Czar. Of course his indignant fellow-patriots declare that it is owing to Russian gold, and not to the truth and beauty of Pan-Slavism. Indeed, though this might be in some respects an extremely useful creed, could all Poles be converted to it, it is hard for an outsider to do other than laugh at it. How can one nationality

be conceivably formed out of all the Slaves? How can fractions so divided in language, religion, and, above all, in geographical distribution, be united into a compact and homogeneous integer? Disjected fragments in Russia, isolated portions in Hungary, in the Danubian Principalities, in northern Turkey, probably large parts of the so-called Hellenes, the Bohemian Czechs, Carinthians, and others, extending quite down to the Adriatic, and, farther north, colonies not a few in the heart of Prussia—these are the scattered elements which make up what should be Slavonia. To unite them, the map of Europe must be re-drawn, and Germany blotted out! Then, again, as to Russia being the natural head of the Slaves—there is probably even less Slavic blood in Russia proper than Hellenic in modern Greece. The Russians are a mixed Ugrian-Tataric people, speaking a Slavonic language. Except for their language, they are nearly as alien as the Turks are from the Greeks.

But, now, what is Pan-Teutonism? It is a phrase hardly known in this country, perhaps not much in Germany. Perhaps, however, the idea, in different shapes and to a varying degree, is more widespread than the name. It finds its fullest development in German pamphlets, which appear from time to time, gaining for their authors a little cheap notoriety, rather than fame, by pandering to national vanity. In some of these it is set forth that the German empire of the future ought to comprise all that was contained under the sceptre of the great Teutonic hero, Karl der Grosse, called by outer barbarians Charlemagne. Also, that all who, by descent and language, belong to the Teutonic stock are bound to adhere to the Fatherland, and shelter themselves under her protecting shadow. So far as they have departed from the German type, adulterated their language with foreign admixture, and the purity of their lineage with "Wälsch" blood, they are degenerate. It is to be hoped that they will see the error of their ways, and themselves humbly crave readmission. But if they will cling to their idols, they are not to be let alone. It is the bounden duty of the Fatherland, as she feels herself strong enough, to reclaim one by one these wandering members of the flock, if need be even by force of arms. "So weit die Deutsche Zunge klingt," as Arndt sings; and in a far wider sense than his song

sets forth are found these erring ones. France, as having been conquered by the Franks, and ruled by "Chlodwig"—under whose name the average Frenchman would scarcely recognize the well-known Clovis—ought, of course, to be German; and if she has adopted a Latinized speech, so much the worse for her. Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and even England, ought to be members of the German empire, on the ground of their language and descent, and although they have—especially the last—fearfully corrupted the mother tongue. All this we can well laugh at as wild nonsense, emanating from the brains of frantic enthusiasts. But when America, stating the San Juan case before the German Emperor, appeals to him as the representative of the parent stock, describes Great Britain and herself as children of that family of which he is the head, and, with a show of something very like filial submission, humbly craves his fatherly advice and decision, we are naturally startled, and not too well pleased, at this Transatlantic echo of the principles of Pan-Teutonism. And in our own country, scattered up and down, in articles and letters from correspondents during the Franco-Prussian war, in books on the English language, in chance remarks which occur in all kind of writings, there are phrases which suggest rather than assert that we English folk are no more than an offshoot from the Germans, and therefore bound to respect them, not only on their own merits, but also because they stand to us in a quasi-parental relation. I do not say this is of any immediate political importance. I do not say it is ever likely to be of any political importance. But unless there are very strong grounds for such a view, it is a voluntary humility totally unworthy of a great people, as we believe ourselves to be.

The question is simply this:—Are the English essentially a branch growing out of the German stock, or are they an independent though kindred race? To borrow terms from grammar, are they really *co-ordinate*, or only *subordinate*? If the latter, we are bound to render just so much homage as our origin demands. If the former, we are not so bound. Most educated Germans think and say that we are a subordinate branch. The feeling of most Englishmen will no doubt be that we are *co-ordinate*. And I think that feeling is well grounded.

How can it be tested? Differences of national character, of directions of thought, of popular manners and customs, are too vague and indefinite to afford a safe criterion. The main reference must be to the languages and to history. We will look first at the testimony of language.

Of course it is not to be denied that our English tongue does bear a very strong resemblance to German; and that it is a real and not merely a superficial resemblance is seen by tracing up words through their older forms—from English of the Victorian era, through the speech of Chaucer, to the Anglo-Saxon; from contemporary German, through middle German, to the forms it exhibits in old writings, such as the national epic of the *Nibelungen-Lied*. At the same time there are great differences, and it may be doubted whether these have generally had their due weight allowed by philologists.

We must not attempt here to plunge into the depths of such an intricate subject, or at most can only—like Dr. Carpenter with his deep-sea soundings—bring up here and there a specimen whereby to judge of the mysteries below. What is known as Grimm's law of change of consonants affords a striking example. Suppose, for instance, a word in Greek and some other languages beginning with *Th*, it is found that the corresponding word in English will commonly begin with *D*, and in German with *T*. Here is a difference to start with. But, further, the classes of letters which I have exemplified by *Th*, *D*, *T*, are like the spokes of a wheel: they always revolve in the same order. That is to say, if the Greek word has *D*, the Saxon or English has *T*, and therefore the German *ought* to have *Th*; but it almost invariably has, in this case, *Z* = *ts*. Nor is this the only case where the proper correspondence of the consonants is less regular than in English. Again, it often happens that the old High German corresponds according to the so-called law; but the modern German breaks the rule by using the same consonant as English. It is remarkable, too, that the consonants in English correspond with those in the *Mæso-Gothic*, which was spoken, as perhaps many of my readers know, on the banks of the Danube in the later days of the Roman empire, and which affords the earliest extant specimen of written literature, akin whether to German or English. One result is, that nearly all books treating of the

genesis of English assume a Gothic tongue which was the common parent of modern German. That there was some tongue once from which both are derived can hardly be doubted. That there is any good reason for calling it Gothic is very uncertain. And I will go so far as to express extreme incredulity whether any such tongue was ever spoken on this side the Volga—so remote do I hold the life of that parent stock whence spring these two mighty branches.

Let us now look at two or three particular examples of English words illustrating other differences. We have in English both "hound" and "dog," but the latter is so far more familiar and common, that the Frenchman has found it necessary to borrow the name "bouldogue," and the German has the word "dogge" or "docke"—equally, I believe, borrowed from us.

Now it has never, that I am aware, been noticed, yet can, as I deem, be proved beyond doubt, that this word is a most ancient one, and can be made to explain its own meaning. There is no such name in perhaps any other spoken European language—that is, in ordinary use. There is none such in Latin, nor any such noun with this precise meaning in Greek. An English dictionary which is at hand explains "dog" as "the *biting* animal," from a supposed derivation which I cannot accept. It is not a specially forcible meaning, for so many animals bite. The application, however, of Grimm's law teaches us to look in Greek for a root *thoch*, and from this root is a Greek noun, meaning a jackal; and a verb, the primitive signification of which was "to bark or bay like a dog." Hence "dog" is "the *barking* animal"—a name highly appropriate to the whole genus, and to no other.

We have a very common word, "loaf." The Saxon was "*hlaif*." There is a German word, "*laib*," and I have not the means of determining, just at this moment, whether it was ever spelt with an *h*. Now, the ordinary Russian word for bread is "*chliëb*," which answers, sound for sound, to the Saxon; and it is important to observe that the Saxon and the Russian word play a more important part in their respective languages than does the German term. Once more, the English "snow," the Gaelic "*sneachd*," the Russian "*sniëg*," all show signs of a final consonant, which in the German "*schnee*" has disappeared even from sight.

I am not writing for savans, but if any such condescend to read these remarks they will know that similar examples might be multiplied to any extent. What conclusions are to be drawn from our deep-sea soundings? First, that the English language as compared with German is *dissimilar*, even in its *similarity*. It bears marks of being independent. It is a sister tongue, and not a daughter tongue. Secondly, that it has shown a wonderful strength in preserving its individuality. Overlaid as the original Anglo-Saxon element is with French and other forms, it has succeeded in preserving its peculiar and distinctive features. While there is reason to believe that Low German dialects have had a partial influence in modifying the old High German, the High German has had absolutely no influence whatever on the English branch of what is called Low German speech. Thirdly, that English, down even to our day, has retained words lost, or almost lost, in German, but old forms of which were in use in remote antiquity, when the ancestors of nearly all European nations used one kind of speech. Fourthly—most important of all—that English is not only a sister to German instead of a daughter, but is more probably the *elder* sister. The learned Grimm himself suggested that Low German might have been the tongue of the women, while High German was that of the men! This is rather too like flattering the vanity of his countrymen. We will not retort that it may just as well have been the other way about, not because we do not consider the latter hypothesis equally probable, but because we do not believe that the so-called two branches of German were at any time spoken in the same family or clan. We believe that at an early period they were very probably *more dissimilar* than when Hengist and Horsa set sail for the shores of England.

In passing from the testimony of language to that of history, it will seem to many that we are stepping on to terra firma after floundering in a deceitful quagmire—so great is the suspicion with which most people view discussions about the forms and changes of words. Every one knows Voltaire's definition of etymology, as a science which makes nothing of the vowels and very little of the consonants. Like many other of his sayings, it is very capable of being retorted. We may say at once that *at first*

sight language itself seems to make nothing of the vowels and very little of the consonants, as every one knows who is acquainted with the verbs in Greek or any highly inflected language. But the very point of etymology is to examine this first impression, and where necessary to correct it—to show that, after all, there are rules and methods observed in these changes, and that language is not purely arbitrary. Those who abuse all linguistic investigations do not themselves deny that there is such a thing as derivation. For the most part, their objections begin at the exact point where the science of language goes beyond their own knowledge, or where its pursuit becomes an effort. What is this but mental laziness?

Now, in one point of view, the testimony of languages is safer than that of history. The main facts of language are *facts*. We may read them carelessly, group them together incorrectly, and by many roads arrive at false conclusions. But the fault is in ourselves. Whereas too many of the statements of history are but *fictions*, or at best half truths, so manipulated before they reach us as to have become almost valueless. It is very difficult to know the truth about even contemporary history; that of the past is too often impossible to ascertain. Over and above, and antecedent to our own faults in dealing with history, come the ignorance, the carelessness, the prejudices, the bad faith of previous generations. There is hardly any subject in the whole circle of knowledge which requires such careful and lengthy sifting to separate wheat from the chaff, or worse than chaff.

Perhaps there is no reason to attribute bad faith to our principal authority on early Germany. Tacitus gives us very little help towards classifying the sixty or seventy tribes whom he names. Probably he could not; and, had he possessed the power, he might not have cared to exercise it on "barbarians." However, he clearly exhibits two main divisions. In the north-west there are the Cherusci and kindred tribes, who so gallantly fought under Arminius (Hermann) against the Romans. Then, farther south, there is a second group often contrasted with these, among the chief of whom are the Suevi and Marcomanni (Suabians and Marchmen). These latter are more disposed to alliance with the Romans, seeming to display less independence and nobility

of spirit than the Northerners. One little trait is recorded of some of the northern tribes. They united in the worship of the goddess Ertha, or Mother-Earth. Now, if the Roman historian has exactly rendered this word, it is a Low German and not a High German form. That is to say, it corresponds to the English "earth," and not to the German "erde." And one of these very tribes he calls the Angli. How this distinction of races proceeded; how the Low Germans furnished our Saxon ancestors; how the Low Germans of the Continent were afterwards chiefly represented by the "Old Saxons;" how the "Old Saxons" were almost totally exterminated by Charlemagne; and how the High Germans expanded and covered the lands once occupied by the Low Germans, until very little trace of these now remains, except in the neighbouring countries of Belgium and Holland, is a lengthy story, which may be read in Dr. Latham's works, or more briefly summed up by Sir E. Creasy.

Some who have written on the Saxon invasion of Britain speak as if all the Germanic tribes were represented in the invading army. This would require most rigorous proof. There is not, as far as I am aware, the slightest colour for such an assertion. There is every reason to think that the immigration was confined to the daring race on the north-west seaboard, and to them alone. And it was here that the so-called Low Germans dwelt. A maritime race they were, and the sovereignty of the seas has proved us their true children. Fathers and children alike might well assume as their motto those words of old Æschylus ("Prom. Vinct.," 296—7)—"Never shalt thou say that thou hast a firmer friend than Ocean," a motto to which the High Germans could never heretofore lay claim. Their invasions were made overland. It was in France, Spain, and the North of Italy that they founded their kingdoms. As on their first entrance into Europe they took a more southerly line than the Low Germans, so to this direction they kept true when the failing strength of the old Roman Empire enabled them to spread westward.

"Westward the course of empire takes its way."

Accordingly, the more westerly is the habitat of a European people, the earlier is likely to have been its entrance into the Continent. It has never been doubted that

the Kelts, whose head-quarters are now the West of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the extreme north-west of France, preceded the Teutonic races. Similarly, the Basques, who have apparently left no traces of their passage through more easterly regions, are thought to be the most ancient existing race in Europe. On this principle, we must conclude that the Low Germans, from whom sprang our Saxon ancestors, migrated into Europe before the High Germans. We drew a like deduction from the evidence of language; and therefore, as we claim that our speech, in right of its Saxon descent, is the elder sister, so are we, on the ground of our Saxon ancestry, the elder brethren, or rather cousins. We do not believe that we are such very near cousins, either, as some would make out. And if we try to pierce through the mists of antiquity, and reproduce the time when we were not, as now, separated from our cousins by that thin silver line of sea, we do not see that we have inherited any stock of gratitude. We probably once dwelt all through the fair hills and dales of Deutschland, and were somewhat rudely dispossessed by our impetuous young cousins, who followed our track and jostled us up into a corner, whence at last we were fain to take ship and settle ourselves in an island, which just suited us for head-quarters, and where we found it easy to keep up our forefathers' traditions and develop our fondness for voyaging and colonization. Our cousinship has been growing fainter ever since. We are only just learning to estimate the proportion of Keltic blood in us, and are, on the whole, glad to think that our Saxon ancestors were not such brutes as school histories make out, and did not utterly exterminate the conquered Britons, but amalgamated with them and formed one people, which even now, above all its other names, glories in the name of Briton. We do not object to being reminded of our relationship with those who are now exclusively called Germans, provided that relationship is properly stated. But we do object to being styled an offshoot from their stock. So far as we can both be said to come of one stock, we claim to be the elder, and therefore the representative, branch. And most of all do we object to being called on to show filial respect, being abused for not showing enough—especially when we think that some among us are already too much disposed to admit

the validity of the claim—and being told that it would serve us right if our “parent” were to chastise us for our naughty disobedience.

After all, there is more of sentimentality than reality in speaking of the kindred blood of nations which possess a distinct and individual existence. Yet such sentimental talk has often had mighty consequences. Nations have been found very ready to defend those whom they believed to be their kin; and also, alas! when they were strong enough, have been known quietly to absorb them, professing all the while the greatest affection for them. Let us remember, if our hearts do yearn after our nearest non-English relations, that they are in sober truth the Dutch and Belgians. I am afraid there is not much enthusiasm felt about our relationship with the Dutch. But perhaps the fault is with them. Their phlegm chills and repels what otherwise would be our noble rage and genial outpouring of soul.

Now I might go on to discuss the question of how far the Germans are unadulterated representatives of even the High German stock, and whether their claim—at least, as regards Prussia—to be the head of Pan-Teutonism is any less exceptionable than that of Russia to put herself forward as the head of Pan-Slavism. But I have said enough to show that, as far as we are concerned, Pan-Teutonism is a delusion and a snare.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—IX.

THE next day, after a long and tiresome day's driving, we got to the Rakaia; and feeling pretty sure that the cattle, tired and footsore as they were, would not be inclined to stray far, we did not think it necessary to watch them. So, after having had supper, and being comfortably settled round a nice, warm, cheerful fire, I was called on to “spin a yarn.”

“As I told you last night,” I said, “you must not expect a very interesting tale from me; but, if you like, I will tell you of a narrow escape I had from drowning in this river. You may not find it very interesting, but I can assure you it was very exciting to me at the time. So, for want of a better, I shall begin, and lose no more time about it.”

A SWIM FOR LIFE.

Last summer was remarkable for the number of nor'-westers we had; and the rivers were consequently frequently very much flooded, and often quite impassable. Accidents were of constant occurrence, and many lives were lost in attempting to cross the rivers when in a highly dangerous state.

In the middle, or rather the early part of the spring, I had occasion to go to Christchurch, and although the Rangitata and Rakaia were both very high on my way up to town, I got safely over without any accident. I stayed about a week or ten days in Christchurch, during which time it blew hard from the north-west every day, and the rivers were all reported to be higher than they had ever been seen before, and grave fears were entertained that the Waitmakarira would burst its banks and flood the whole town. Tired of hanging about waiting for a change of weather, I and two other fellows, Tom Jackson and Bridson, made up our minds to start, and either take our chance of being able to cross, or wait at the accommodation house on the other side from here, until the river fell sufficiently to allow us to go on. In the evening, when we got to the Rakaia, we found the river flooded from bank to bank, higher than I had ever seen it. Evidently, there was not the slightest possibility of our getting across for at least a day or two. We were half inclined to ride back to Christchurch, and there wait until the weather changed; but hoping that we might be able to cross in a day or two at farthest, we made up our minds to remain where we were, and be as jolly as we could under the circumstances.

After a careful search, we found the means of amusement at our disposal consisted of three books and a half. One a valuable work on ornamental gardening—no doubt interesting and entertaining in the extreme, but which our uneducated minds were unable to appreciate. Next, an old book of sermons. These we each in turn tried; but the task of “reading, marking, learning, and inwardly digesting” them was so hard and so dry, that after drinking an enormous quantity of grog in a vain attempt to soften it, we gave up in despair. The third book looked more promising outside, as it was gaily bound; but, alas for our hopes, on opening it we found it was neither more nor less than a dictionary. The half book

was the only one, after all, from which we derived any fun or amusement. It was torn right down, through the middle of the pages, and we occupied ourselves in reading the first half of a line and filling in the context from imagination, with a result never dreamt of by the original author. Even this highly intellectual pursuit of literature in time became monotonous, and we were greatly delighted by finding an ancient and venerable pack of cards, which, although minus an ace and a king or two, was quite perfect enough to be easily made playable with. Every game was tried in turn, from whist, with a dummy, to three-handed or "cut-throat" euchre, and even to beggar my neighbour. Still, with all these advantages and amusements of thrilling interest, we found the time hang heavy and pass slowly, and many a look was taken at the angry river; but there was no sign of its falling, and a heavy cloudy sky hanging over the "Gorge" showed that the nor'-wester had not yet blown itself out.

The next day, being Sunday, was longer than ever, as we could not even play cards, and so were left perfectly idle. It blew so hard that we could hardly walk about, and after one or two attempts, preferred to remain in the house. It certainly knows how to blow anywhere in New Zealand; but I'll back the Rakaia against all creation for a regular "buster" from the nor'-west. That Sunday it blew so hard that it upset a loaded bullock-dray, and every moment we expected to find the roof over our heads taking an aerial voyage on its own account; but, although it shook and creaked, it kept its place. At sunset the wind fell very much, and we began to have hopes of a change. By the morning the river had fallen a little, but was very much too high to think of trying to cross. Even the punt was as yet unable to be worked, and all communication from the other side was stopped. Towards evening, small patches of shingle were to be seen here and there; but the river was still rushing forward like a mill-race, carrying everything before it in its headlong career, and no one appeared to wish to venture into it. Although it fell a little during the night, it was still too high to think of crossing next morning. In the middle of the day a man on the other side tried, and, he and his horse being swept away, he had a narrow escape from drowning, being pulled out when quite insensible.

The punt, however, was taken across two or three times, but only with passengers.

The punts used on the Rakaia are about twenty feet long by ten broad, quite flat-bottomed, and sharp at both ends. When taking horses over, it is necessary to swim them after the punt when the river is too high to ford, and this is often a work of considerable difficulty and trouble, particularly when there are shallow places or "spits" in the middle of the stream; for then the horses either stand still and refuse to follow the punt, or they are unable to go fast enough to keep pace with it, as it sweeps rapidly down the current. I may as well give you, Bill, some sort of idea of what the Rakaia is like. The others know it well enough, without any explanation from me.

Unlike the Rangitata, with its rough, rocky bed, the bottom of the Rakaia is composed of small stones and gravel, and so the stream looks smoother than most of the other rivers. This adds greatly to the danger, by deceiving those who, not having crossed it before, think it does not run so rapidly as is the case, and are therefore surprised at the strength and force of the current when they get into it. Down what are called "rapids"—that is to say, the small falls—the stream rushes and foams in broken waves of two or even three feet in height. At the foot of each of these rapids there are deep pools, varying in depth from a few feet to perhaps twenty or thirty, and in which there is generally a strong under-current, and even small whirlpools, which spin man or horse round in a very confusing manner. This alone is the cause of many accidents. Probably the rider, finding his horse twisting and turning about, tries to guide him, and in doing so pulls his head partially under water. The scared horse—generally timid in water—getting alarmed, begins plunging and struggling to free his head, becoming more frightened every moment; until his rider loses all command of him, and he either sinks, or, as is more often the case, rolls over, compelling his rider to shift for himself, and perhaps stupefying him by kicking him when under water.

The river-bed of the Rakaia is about a mile and a half wide, and is divided into a number of streams of various sizes and depths, the larger ones being sometimes quite two hundred yards across, and, of course, deep or shallow according to the

state of the river. When the river is "up," these streams spread and join each other, until the whole river appears like one huge, mighty, rushing sea. It is seldom, however, that the whole of the shingle-bed is quite covered, and I can only remember having seen it in that condition once during the many years I have been in Canterbury.

Many narrow escapes occur. The force and swiftness of the current, whilst causing the accident, is often the means of safety, by carrying the unfortunate traveller on to a shallow spit, or washing him ashore at a turn of the stream, before he has time to drown.

One of the nearest things I have heard of happened many years ago to a friend of mine. At that time there were no such things as punts on any of the rivers, nor, indeed, was there much necessity for them, as very few people crossed the Rakaia. The country on the south side of it was little known, and going "down south" was looked upon by the "Canterbury Pilgrims" as rather a Columbus sort of adventure. My friend and two others were going south in quest of country, when he met with the accident and escape I am going to tell you of. The Rakaia was very high when they got to it; but one of them, who had a run near Timaru, and had therefore crossed the river several times before, thought they could ford; and they agreed to try. When they got into the middle of the largest stream, their horses were swept off their legs. Now, my friend was neither a good rider nor a very cool fellow in danger, and he soon became confused and frightened when he found himself being carried along at such speed, with the water boiling up round him. Losing all presence of mind, he tried to steer his horse to the bank, and turning him across the stream, succeeded in rolling him over and over. Not a stroke could he swim, and so drowned he must certainly have been, had he not made a snatch at some black object he saw near him. This proved to be the tail of his horse, and, grasping it with all the tenacity of a drowning man, he was dragged to the shore all but dead.

But one of the saddest cases of drowning I have heard of took place last summer. W——, a young fellow, well known and much liked, was crossing the Rakaia on his way to Christchurch, in company with another man, when by some means or other both got swept away and lost their horses. The

men who were working the punt saw them, and went to their rescue. They were making for W——, but he called out to them—

"Never mind me, I'm all right. Pick up D——, I can easily swim ashore."

Being a first-rate swimmer, he would no doubt have saved himself; but unfortunately, after picking up his companion, the men in the punt went after him, and just as they reached him he sank never to rise again. It was said that the punt, being badly managed, ran over and sank him; but the truth was never ascertained, although the matter was carefully investigated. Poor W——'s body was never found, although a few human bones were discovered months afterwards near the spot where he was drowned; but there was no clue as to whether they were his or not.

Tired at last of waiting in the abominable little accommodation house, we made up our minds to try and get across. By this time the punt was able to work sufficiently to carry people over; but owing to the altered state of the part of the river where it was worked, horses could not be swum behind it. As whoever rode the horses over must get very wet, even if the river was found to be fordable, we agreed to "go odd man out" to see who should lead them over. I was the unlucky one, and so had to make the best of it. The ferryman was to lead one and I the other. The ferryman's horse was a well-known one in the river, and just as safe as a boat, although not quite so dry. He was a great, big roan, standing over sixteen hands high, and very powerful. Accustomed to crossing five or six times every day, he was as much at home in the water as in his stable, and, from his great height, could ford when most horses would be swimming. My horse was a jet black, about fifteen three high, not much accustomed to river work; but being a bold, high-couraged horse, I had every confidence in him, and did not hesitate to trust myself to him, feeling pretty certain that he would swim if called on to do so. So, about an hour before sunset, the ferryman and I started up the river to hunt for a crossing. We could see no signs of a ford until we got to the "Big Cabbage Tree," nor, indeed, did we expect to find one sooner. Here, however, there is generally a ford if the river is passable anywhere; and we began to try stream after stream, but without success, until we thought we should have to give it up for a bad job. At last, after many repeated attempts, we

came to a spot which looked more promising, and rode slowly into it. The stream we were in was about two hundred and fifty yards wide, I should think, with the current setting to the opposite side, which was, of course, greatly in our favour; because, if we did get afloat, we were sure to be swept to the right side. As we got more into the stream, the water rose higher and higher, until it ran to our horses' withers on the side up stream. I found I had made a grand mistake in leading Jackson's horse on the off side, for of course he was on the side highest up the stream, and being a little horse, and with no weight on his back to steady him, would begin to float long before mine. But it was too late now to alter, for the stream was rushing along with such speed and violence that I found it impossible to do much in it. Meantime, the ferryman had got some little distance ahead of me, whilst I was trying to get the led horse on the other side of me; and I could see he was just able to keep his horse's legs on the ground, whilst the one he had been leading was swimming down stream towards the other side, he having let it go as soon as it got afloat. A few yards more, and I saw Jackson's horse begin to "bob;" and as it kept bumping against mine, and pushing me down stream every step I took, I saw there was nothing for it but to turn my horse's head boldly down stream and swim clear away. I shall never forget the queer sensation of swimming over a rapid on a horse's back. The short broken little waves kept leaping up nearly to my neck, as my horse swam deep in the water, with nothing visible but his head and ears, and rocking from side to side in a most unpleasant manner, threatening every moment to roll over on me. The buoyancy of the water, and the jerky, novel sort of movement, made it extremely difficult to retain my seat, whilst the rushing and whirling of the water around me made me feel so giddy, that once or twice I had to shut my eyes to recover my head.

Of course I let Jackson's horse go, and it was swimming in front of me, and, not being encumbered with any weight, was making better "weather" of it than I was doing. My horse was, however, swimming strongly and well, every now and then snorting and groaning in a half indignant, pitying sort of manner; and I had no misgivings about getting out all right.

Down the stream we went for some con-

siderable distance, slowly and gradually getting swept towards the side. How cold and freezing the water was! And how could it be otherwise, being nothing but melted snow from the mountains?

Meanwhile, the loose horse had got to the side, and with a scramble, and after nearly falling backwards into the stream, contrived to climb ashore. From seeing the difficulty it had in getting out of the water, I concluded that the bank at the side must be perpendicular, with very deep water underneath, and began to speculate on the chances of our being able to clamber up it. However, I had little time for thought, for in a few minutes my horse had his two fore feet on the top of the bank, and was doing all he could to struggle on to it. The more he tried, the less likely he seemed to succeed, for his hind legs only pushed away the stones and gravel from under them, without giving him any help.

For a few seconds he stood as if he was rearing straight up; then I felt him falter; and, knowing what was going to happen, I threw myself off head first into the deep, treacherous water, diving down as deeply as possible, anxious if possible to get clear of his feet. Nor was I one instant too soon, for as I left his back, he fell into the river, kicking and plunging. How I escaped being killed is a miracle. One of his feet just grazed my chin, and had I been a few inches nearer, I should never have lived to tell you this yarn. Blinded with water, and stiff with cold, for a moment, when I came to the surface, I felt confused, and struck out wildly and at random. Fortunately, however, my head was down stream, and in a short time I got all right, and slowly swam on, waiting for the current to wash me ashore. I had some distance to swim before I got to the side, and in my hurry to get out nearly got rolled over by catching at a large stone on the bank. However, to make a long story short, I at last succeeded in reaching the bank, but so cold and exhausted that I could not climb up, and, had it not been for the ferryman who came and dragged me ashore, should have fallen back again. We caught the horses, and after picking up my hat, which had been washed ashore close to me, mounted and rode off to meet our companions. They had seen me swept away, and given me up for lost. We were anxious to go on to the Ashburton that night, so away we went at a pace which soon brought

us to the end of the eighteen miles. By the time we got to Turtons I was nearly dry, and quite warm and comfortable. In the evening I rather astonished and amused the servant girls by going into the kitchen and asking for a frying-pan, into which I put my own watch and two others I was taking down for some fellows on the station, and fried them, to dry the water in the works. And the cooking dodge seemed to suit them very well, for they began to tick away, and went all right again.

"You certainly had a close shave of it, Harry," said Bill, as I stopped; "but it seems to me that it is folly to run unnecessary risks in crossing, when by waiting a few hours the danger would be past."

"Yes, so it is," put in Pat; "but a few hours are often of great importance. And besides that, it is a miserable job waiting at one of those nasty, wretched accommodation houses day after day, and for my part I'd rather chance a soaking."

"For my part," said Stevens, "I think the danger in crossing the rivers is greatly exaggerated; for if people would only keep cool, and not get nervous when they find themselves in the water, fewer accidents would happen."

"Ah, it's all very well to say 'keep cool,' but if a fellow who can't swim a stroke finds himself in the midst of a mad, roaring stream, getting twisted and turned about, and half smothered with water, it's not such an easy matter to 'keep cool, and not get nervous;' even a good swimmer gets flurried when he is suddenly thrown into a raging torrent," replied Bill. "What good would my not getting nervous do me, if I was on the back of a buck-jumping horse? Would it keep me in the saddle? Or would it save my bones if I came off? Not it. Depend upon it, absence of body is worth all the presence of mind in the world when in danger."

"I dare say you are right, Bill," rejoined Pat; "but we are so used to getting into messes when crossing the rivers, that perhaps we rather underrate their dangerous natures, and—'happy go lucky'—come safely out of them when more cautious and sensible people would come to grief."

"No doubt of that," I said. "As my old copy-books had it, 'Custom commonly makes things easy.' If so, it ought to be easy enough to us by this time. One day I was looking for a crossing for Maxwell's

dogcart at the Orari, and was trotting along the river-bed through some grass, and with water not up to my horse's knees, when suddenly, without the least warning, I found myself, horse and all, head over heels in a deep water-hole. What a splashing we made, and what a drenching I got, to be sure!"

"Travelling now is different to what it was some years ago," said Pat. "In the early days, when there were no tracks and few houses, it was often difficult to find your way over the dismal, dreary plains, and many absurd and laughable mistakes were made. One fellow I knew was driving some sheep across from the Hinds to the Rangitata. He started during a thick, dense fog; but after travelling all day, he was forced to camp, as he had not reached the river. Next morning he again started, thinking to get to the Rangitata in an hour or two; but the fog was as thick as ever, and he could not find his way, and so was compelled to make another night of it in the middle of the plain. On the third morning, the sun came out and the fog cleared away, so he had no trouble in steering a true course. Of course he expected to get to the river early, as he made sure it could not be many miles distant. Fancy his disgust when, after going some miles, he came on his first camping place, and found that, all the day before, he had been amusing himself by driving his sheep round in nearly a complete circle, and was actually not so far on as he had been at the end of his first day's drive."

"They were queer days," I said; "and a strange, solitary sort of life we led up country at that time. I have been for months on the station without seeing a strange face. I remember well how tremendously we were surprised and taken aback by the very unexpected arrival of two ladies. It was the first time that any of the fair sex had done us the honour of visiting our rough home, and they caused us the greatest consternation. What a fuss there was!—first in hunting out our best blue serge jumpers and other bush finery, and then in consulting with the old hut-keeper as to what he could do for dinner, &c. How ladies managed to rough it as they did, surprises me now—more even than it did then."

"But the most notable visitor we had in those days was the Bishop. He and a missionary made a tour through the island—a

sort of 'progression,' without more state than was obtainable from a packhorse to carry their 'swags.' Some rather good tales are told of him. On one occasion he was seen busy helping to put out a bush fire, working away with his bishop's hat on, and his apron tucked up under his waistband. Once he had to share not only the room, but the same bed with a half-caste and his child. But the best yarn I have heard of him was this. One of the stations he visited belonged to C——, a good-hearted but ignorant English farmer, whose ideas of quality were very hazy. He had a sort of indistinct notion that the Bishop had a title, and should be addressed as 'My lord;' and, being greatly awed by the presence of such a great man, was very fearful of not treating him with all respect.

"During dinner, C—— pressed the Bishop to make himself at home, and did all in his power to make him ill with offering him good things. C——, not being a very elegant carver, allowed his 'missis' to distribute to the wants of the family. On this occasion there was a roast of beef on the table, and Mrs. C—— helped the Bishop to a large piece, but forgot to give him any fat. No sooner did C—— notice this than, 'on hospitable thoughts intent,' and determined to give the Bishop his full allowance of title, he called out to his wife—

"'Mary, my dear, give the Lord some fat.'"

"I thought, Stevens, you were going to tell us the history of your bushranging friend—Clifford, didn't you call him? It would be interesting, I think," said Bill, after laughing at my tale—"I rather like hearing about such fellows."

"Well, I may do so," replied Stevens, "if it comes to my turn again. But perhaps you will not think it so interesting as you expect when I do."

"Your yarn, Harry," said Bill, turning to me, "might have been made more exciting if you had just 'coloured' it a little."

"Yes," I replied; "but I said before I began that I would tell it just as it happened, and warned you not to expect much."

MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.

IN TWO PARTS.—II.

WAGNER had time to consider the causes which have reduced the stage to the equivocal position it occupies in regard to public life; and, on the other

hand, to take into account the foundation of those social relations, which would as necessarily produce a theatre such as he conceived it, as modern social relations produce the present theatre. As he had found in the rare appearances of artists of genius a basis for the character of his dramatic-musical ideal, history also presented to him a type for the ideal relation of the theatre, such as he imagined it to public life. This was the theatre of ancient Athens, which was only opened on days of special festivity, when the enjoyment of art was at the same time a religious celebration, and wherein the most distinguished men of the state took part, as poets or actors: appearing like priests before the assembled population of town and country, who were filled with such high expectations of the loftiness of the works to be performed, that Æschylus and Sophocles could produce before them the profoundest of all poems, and be certain of their appreciation.

The reasons for the decline of this incomparable work of art were easily perceivable. His attention was first drawn to the social causes of this decline, and they appeared to be identical with the causes of the decline of the ancient state itself. Thence he endeavoured to deduce the social principles of that political organization of the human race, which, correcting the imperfections of the antique state, would be able to found a condition of things in which the relations between art and public life, as it once existed in Athens, would revive in a manner, if possible, more noble, and certainly more durable. His thoughts on this subject were stated in a little pamphlet, entitled "Die Kunst und die Revolution" (Art and Revolution).

For a comparatively longer time, he then occupied himself with inquiring into the character of this deplorable dissolution of the Greek work of art. The first thing that struck him was the remarkable fact that those different branches of art which had previously been united in the perfect drama were now dissolved and separated. The mighty union by which it had been possible to make the most profound and exalted intentions of humanity perfectly intelligible to the people had ceased to exist, and its component parts—the arts, as we call them—from the position of inspired teachers, had sunk to the level of a pleasant pastime for individual lovers of art; so that while the

people were publicly entertained with combats of gladiators and wild beasts, educated men occupied themselves with literature in private seclusion. It was especially important to perceive that the different arts in their separate and isolated cultivation, however their powers of expression might be increased and developed by brilliant genius, could never—without degenerating into unnaturalness and downright faultiness—aim in any way at replacing that all-powerful work of art, the production of which had only been possible to their combined efforts.

With the aid of eminent art critics—Lessing, for instance, in his researches on the limits of painting and poetry—Wagner arrived at the result that each separate branch of art develops itself to the full extent of its capabilities, and that, arrived at those limits, it cannot overstep them without incurring the risk of becoming incomprehensible and fantastical, nay, even absurd. At this point, it seemed clear to him that each art, once arrived at its limits, demanded to join itself to a sister art. He seemed, finally, to be able to show it as existing most distinctly and strikingly in the relation between music and poetry; especially taking into consideration the great significance of modern music. Endeavouring thus to imagine a work of art, of which all separate branches are supposed to unite, each in a supreme state of perfection, he arrived spontaneously at a clear conception of that ideal, which his mind had unconsciously formed for itself as a vague vision. As he was unable—remembering the thoroughly faulty relation of the stage to public life—to realize this ideal work of art in our own time, he called it “*Kunstwerk der Zukunft*” (“Art-work of the Future”); and under this title he published a pamphlet, in which he entered into a somewhat detailed exposition of the ideas just mentioned, and it is to this title that we are indebted for that spectral invention—“The Music of the Future”—which haunts French and other reports on musical art, and of which it is easy now to perceive both the aim and the erroneous origin.

A storm, the like of which had not darkened the musical horizon since Glück carried his operatic reforms in Paris, burst round Wagner's ears directly after the publication of this book. Musical critics, fighting under every manner of flag, and chirping under cover of all manner of variegated feather, made day hideous with their clamour. There

was one Herr Bischoff, of Cologne, whose whelping was heard far and wide. It was he who invented “Music of the Future”—that is to say, a sort of music hideous and abominable to our ears, but warranted by its perpetrators to sound all right to the ears of our grandchildren. In a reckless moment Franz Liszt, Wagner's great protagonist, was rash enough to adopt the nickname of “Musician of the Future,” much like the “water-guesen” of Holland had adopted their nickname and gloried in it; and ever since that day there has been a strong party of German musicians who have in all humility adopted the sobriquet of “Musicians of the Future.”

To sum up. The characteristic feature, then, of what is called the “Music of the Future,” as distinguished from the traditional forms of instrumental music, is this: Composers nowadays try to embody a distinct poetical idea, and the musical form is modified and possibly created entirely anew under the influence of this poetical idea; whereas, under the older *régime* of Haydn, Mozart, and their immediate followers, instrumental music was written according to prescribed forms and shapes, in strict accordance with traditional “shablonés.” In Haydn's time the form was paramount, and the poetical element subservient, if it was present at all.

In our day the poetical idea moulds and shapes the form, and music expresses intense emotions, instead of being confined to a sort of arabesque-like combination of pleasant sounds under more or less complicated structural restrictions. The danger of the old method was, that a composer should lay stress upon form, and neglect contents; that he should say things extremely well which were hardly worth saying. With us the danger is, that a composer should express high emotions in a thaotic manner, and that he should attempt to express things in music which the art is incapable of fully realizing.

GUILTY OR NOT?

IN TWO PARTS.—I.

THE clashing of rival interests, religious and political parties, has always made Ireland a difficult country to govern, and an interesting subject of study to strangers unused to the prominent characteristics of the nation. Several years ago, when I came to the country first, it so happened that cir-

cumstances made me witness to, and even a partaker in, scenes of a peculiarly exciting and remarkable nature; which, however, it may be, impressed me more than they would have impressed an habitual resident.

My wife's health being delicate, and having been advised to try what a winter in Queens-town—a place much resorted to by invalids—would do for her, I effected an exchange with a Cork clergyman, and arranged to do his duty for six months in the city, which is less than an hour's distance by train, or train and boat, from the harbour on which Queenstown is situated.

I could not, of course, spend many days out of each week with my wife, as I had much to do in finding out and visiting the poor Protestants in my district, which lay in the business and unfashionable part of the town. I had my own lodgings in Cork, as she had hers in Queenstown.

We came to Ireland in November. In March began the Cork Assizes, and, I am sorry to say, the judges had no chance of getting white gloves on this occasion, there being several criminal cases for trial. The townsfolk were all astir round the Court-house every day—not only to witness the pompous arrival of their lordships, but also, as it seemed, to discuss what went on within the Court.

I had been visiting at some business houses in Great George's-street—at the end of which the Cork Court-house stands—one Thursday, when, having just then nothing particular to do, I made my way through the eager crowd into the Court. An official, seeing I was a clergyman, made a path for me, and led on to where he thought it possible I might get a place; but he told me it was hardly worth while going in now, as the adjournment would come on so soon. Just then a friend, seated in a position which commanded a good view of the dock, beckoned me to a seat beside him. The trial going on was one for murder. The prisoner at the bar was an intellectual, refined-looking man, though still looking what he was, an artizan. He was by trade a glazier and house painter, as I afterwards learned, and clever at his work, having been educated far beyond it. When I took possession of the small space allotted to me, I, of course, looked first at him. He was evidently all on the strain to take in something that was going on. His face was pale, eager, and haggard; looking not at all the face of a man whom

one would expect to see up for murder. The case for the Crown was not yet completed; but, as the guide who had brought me hither had said, it *was* hardly worth while coming in now. The afternoon adjournment almost immediately broke up the sitting of the Court. My friend was interested in the case, however, and he and I sat on after the crowd disappeared. He was but too well pleased to enlighten me as to the case against the prisoner, whose appearance had deeply interested me also.

James Barton was a Protestant and an Orangeman. This was unfortunate for him as regards sympathy from his neighbours, who were, of course, chiefly Catholics; but besides these drawbacks, he had many others which would come in the way, my friend said, of any evidence being forthcoming in his favour. Being much better educated and far above most men of his station, he had, perhaps, conducted himself too haughtily; and he was therefore, on this account also, unpopular. Then he was married to a Catholic, Norah Mahony, whose whole clan and connection were therefore his bitter enemies. Worst of all, the man whom he was accused of having murdered had been a bigoted and zealous Catholic. This man, Farrell, had married Barton's wife's half sister. The mother of the two girls had been twice married and twice widowed, and had, finally, died herself, leaving her two daughters to the care of her father, an old man, whose chief wealth consisted in a comfortable cottage and a large and valuable garden running down to the back of the house. Farrell, it seemed, was a well-to-do man, keeping a thriving little shop; while Barton was miserably poor, and had a fast increasing family. His father, a wealthy farmer, of good and respectable birth and position, had cast him off completely when he married Norah. Not only was she of a different religion, but she was, old Barton thought, far inferior in position to his son. He therefore, on his death, left everything he had to a younger son, who had since taken no notice of his brother. My friend, who was a medical man, Dr. Baines, was able to give me all these particulars, as he knew all the parties concerned in the matter, having formerly lived in the village of Lisafahan, the scene of the late tragedy.

"I do believe," he said, "that this wretched man will have but one witness in his favour, when his side of the case comes

on; while there have already been nearly half a dozen damning witnesses against him. And yet I do not believe the truth of the matter has been got at all as yet. I hear poor Norah Barton, the wife, has been down with typhus, the poor man's fever. That accounts for her non-appearance at the Court; though, of course, her evidence would be of no avail in the matter. I know of but one friend likely to help poor Barton at this pinch—a cousin of his, a woman named Margaret Troy. She lived next house to where the fray took place, and saw it all, I believe. The worst witness against him is Farrell's daughter—a forward little minx. They'll have her up again presently, and you can see for yourself. Though she tries to do the gentle, her voice has a ring of the scold and vixen every now and then."

The cause of dispute between Farrell and Barton was as follows:—

The Bartons always expected Norah's grandfather—old Michael Deane—would leave them his little property. They asserted he had made a will to that effect, and had entrusted it to an attorney in the neighbourhood, named Dwyer. The girl, Mary Farrell, on the other hand, asserted that the old man had always said he would leave all he had to her mother—his granddaughter—Bridget Farrell, he was so offended with Norah for marrying a Protestant.

"'Twas on the girl's tongue to say 'Bloody Protestant,' there," observed the doctor to me, at this part of his tale; "but she checked herself, out of respect to the Court, I suppose."

Unfortunately for Barton, he was away from home when old Michael at last died. Things had been going worse than ever with him; his family were in miserable poverty, and he had gone some distance in search of work. On hearing of old Deane's death—which he did not hear of for nearly a fortnight after it had occurred—he hastened back with all speed, but found he was too late. Farrell had taken possession of the house and garden, and Dwyer, the attorney, declared he had no will.

"It is my belief," observed the doctor here, "that a bribe from Farrell did the work there. However this trial turns out, I will try and come to the bottom of that piece of work. I know Dwyer, and what he's capable of."

Some one put Barton up to the idea that

if he could but gain possession of the little estate, half his battle would be won; and according to the girl's, Mary Farrell's, account, he had come to the house one day, with two men—all three being armed with pitchforks—and had then and there attempted forcibly to turn her father out of the place. On his making a successful resistance, the girl asserted that Barton had vowed he would have Farrell's life in revenge. She said her father was quietly asleep in bed on the morning of the murder, when, at about six o'clock, the servant, Anne Clancey, had aroused him with the news that Barton was taking down the wall at the end of the garden, as he said the gentleman who owned the fields next had given him leave to build the wall straight, in place of slanting as it had hitherto run, thus adding a slip of a couple of feet to the garden. She said her father had hastily put some clothes on him, and had run down to the garden, intending, she said, to reason with the offender. She swore she heard her father threaten Barton with the civil law if he meddled with what did not belong to him; on which the prisoner had rushed on him, thrown him down, and cleft his head in two with a shovel he held in his hand. The servant, Anne Clancey, swore much to the same effect; but added that Barton had called out in triumph, as he did the deed, that "he had done the job; and that one blow was as good as ten." Job Cummins, uncle to the deceased, swore that when he came into his back yard, at six o'clock that morning, he had seen Barton at the garden wall, as it adjoined his yard. The prisoner, he said, was working with a crowbar at the removal of a heavy stone. He then went on to give much the same evidence as the other witnesses; adding that Barton was about to hit Farrell a second blow as he lay prostrate, but that, when he and the two girls shouted "murder," he had turned to escape.

"His evidence was the last we had," observed the doctor. "And now here they all come again to the work."

The Court was filling fast. As the members of the jury took their seats, I observed them particularly. They were almost exclusively business men in the city. Several of them were known to me by sight; with two I was well acquainted, having been often in their houses. I saw that these two gentlemen recognized me, and I nodded to

them across the Court. The prisoner, when he again took his place at the bar, looked all round the tiers of seats with an apparently despairing search after a friendly face.

As my friend the doctor expected, the girl, Mary Farrell, was again had up for cross-examination, and I fully endorsed his opinion as to her character. Of the truth or falsehood of her tale it was, of course, hard to judge. Then the man Cummins was again had up. On some expression conveying reproach for the cowardice of his behaviour, he said he did throw a stone at Barton when he saw him raise his shovel a second time. He also swore to having heard the prisoner threaten Farrell on a previous occasion.

Other witnesses for the prosecution were then examined; and again, a third time, Mary Farrell was called up. The counsel for the defence tried to elicit from her a confession that her father carried some weapon of defence with him when he went down into the garden, but this she stoutly denied. He took nothing—not even a stick, she swore. He just threw some clothes on him, and ran down. She was asked where her mother was during the fray.

“Not in the house, at all,” she said. “She had been left to mind the shop, and had never come to her old home since the old man’s death.”

She was asked, “Why so?” and, for the first time, she grew a little confused.

“How could she tell?” she asked. “Her mother was busy; and then she had been fond of the old man.”

The prisoner gave a sort of indignant moan just then. It sounded, to me, like the cry of some animal in pain.

“Jane Farrell knew the old man left a will behind him,” muttered the doctor, half aloud.

“Silence in court!” shouted an official.

After Mary Farrell was again dismissed, the man Cummins was recalled, and an attempt made to get him to allow that Farrell had been armed; but he also denied the fact.

Meanwhile, the time was passing, and I found it quite impossible to remain longer in the Court; I therefore left before the case for the defence had opened.

The next day being Friday, what with Lenten services and other duties, I found it

quite out of the question to visit the Court-house at all, much as I had been interested in the trial. Late in the afternoon, however, just as I was sitting down to my dinner, Dr. Baines came to my lodgings, to tell me how the case had gone. It had turned out as he feared. The prisoner had been found guilty and sentenced to death on the following Monday.

Except a witness to good conduct and respectability, in the person of the clergyman of the parish he lived in, Barton’s counsel had been able to produce but one person’s evidence to disprove the mass of accusation.

A woman, Margaret Troy, cousin to the prisoner, had sworn that she too had witnessed the fray from the window of the house she lived in, which looked out at the back, to the garden of old Deane’s cottage. There was a field between, she confessed, but the distance was by no means too far for her to see clearly all that had occurred. She swore that as Farrell ran down the garden he made two or three attempts to draw something from under his coat; and at last, when he reached the prisoner, she saw him lift a sword in his hand. No cross-examination could shake her testimony on this point; but, as it was wholly unsupported by any other witness, it had proved of no avail to Barton. The Attorney-General, who had come down to the Cork Assizes on this occasion, had summed up, the doctor said, dead against the prisoner. The jury had returned with their verdict after little more than half an hour’s deliberation.

“Poor Barton fainted dead when he heard it given in,” said the doctor. “I had to go round and help to bring him to, that he might hear his sentence; and, on my honour, I believe it hurt me more than him. We propped him up on a chair; but I don’t believe he heard a word. Poor fellow, I suppose he was thinking of his wife and babies. I had never heard a man condemned to death before, and I expected he would wince at the black cap, but not a bit did he seem to care; nor did he shrink at the end of his lordship’s speech, though ’tis ringing in my head still—‘James Barton, you are to be taken from the bar where you now are, back to the place from whence you came, the gaol, where your irons are to be struck off; and on Monday you are to be hanged by the neck until you are dead,

when your body is to be delivered to the county infirmary for dissection; and the Lord have mercy on your soul!"

TABLE TALK.

WE are all acquainted with the "femme incomprise" of Madame de Staël and others, but very scant justice has been done to the "homme incompris," at least as numerous a class. Perhaps for two reasons: first, he does not think it worth while to complain if unappreciated; secondly, the "sex" has a marvellous way of its own of affecting to understand, or to be interested in, what in reality conveys no idea whatsoever to it. Yet, if a lady lays herself out for unappreciativeness, how very aggravating she can be! As, for instance, when Lady Byron asked her lord, "when he intended to give up that silly habit of versification?" he being at the time, beyond all doubt, the first poet in the world. A young gentleman, meeting in society the daughter of an eminent man of science, observed to her, "I was not so fortunate as to find you in when I called yesterday." "Well," said she, "papa has a head, and so has a pin; but I do not know which is worth more—I have never heard anything of your visit." As if the savant had not something better to think of. We have all heard stories of the profound Socrates and the unappreciative Xantippe. Why multiply instances?

A CORRESPONDENT: The following further notes on christenings may perhaps interest readers of ONCE A WEEK. At the little village of Buckland Newton, in Dorsetshire, there prevailed a custom some forty years ago—and very likely it has not been altered since—of naming all the children of a family with the same initial letter. For example, the blacksmith had all his children christened with names beginning with H. Biblical names were the favourites; and one labourer, with a large family, who had chosen M as the family initial, was puzzled to meet the increasing demand upon that letter, and, after ransacking the Old Testament, discovered and adopted for two of his girls the names of Mahalath and Mehetabel. The following is one of the best stories we have heard in connection with christenings, and it is vouched for by an authority in which we have unqualified confidence. The first four boys of a family were named after the four

Evangelists; on the arrival of the fifth, he was christened Acts of the Apostles. This is a fact; and we are informed, on good authority also, that there are now in Canterbury at least two instances in which, the names of the four Evangelists having been similarly exhausted, the fifth child was christened Acts, without, however, the addition "of the Apostles." Whether in these instances the clergyman officiating made any remonstrance we cannot say—if he did, it was in vain; and, indeed, the parents who choose such names are usually obstinate in sticking to them, despite remonstrance. The case of "Maharshalahashbaz," referred to in a previous number, occurred at Whitchurch Canonorum, in Dorsetshire, and the boy went generally by the name of Shalah.

A CORRESPONDENT: Has the eminent pyrotechnist, Sir William Congreve, an engineer officer second only to Lord Napier and the illustrious Sir John Burgoyne, and the inventor of Congreve rockets and the Congreve match, quite faded out of the reader's memory? He was lately brought back to mine by the following anecdote, told me by an old gentleman who had served under him, and who had disliked him extremely:—Wandering one day into Westminster Abbey, he saw there the monument to Purcell, the musician, on which was inscribed the well-known and most graceful piece of flattery, "He has gone to that place where alone his own works can be excelled." Near it was the tablet to Congreve, which was, as yet, blank. Taking a pencil from his pocket, the (then) young officer wrote with it, on the marble, this paraphrase: "He has gone to that place where alone his own fireworks can be excelled."

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

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Terms of Subscription for ONCE A WEEK, free by post:—Weekly Numbers for Six Months, 5s. 5d.; Monthly Parts, 5s. 8d.

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No. 279.

May 3, 1873.

Price 2d.

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PART II.—AT HOME.
CHAPTER XXXIX.



A MONTH passed by, and no message or letter was sent to Philip. He, now quite gone back to the old life, spent his days chiefly at the Burleigh Club, in the usual unprofitable pursuits of a man about town. This is not an improving course; and every day found him more ready to keep what he had got, whatever might be the truth. His mother? And if she were his mother, what duty did he owe to her? When the new year came round, he was curious to learn if the usual two hundred pounds would be paid into his account. It was not. Then he was quite certain about the sender. It was Madame de Guyon. Another thing bothered him. Nothing could be ascertained as to Mr. MacIntyre's whereabouts. No notice given at the lodgings. He had quietly disappeared. One thing was ascertainable, however: he had drawn out

the whole of his money in bank-notes and gold.

"Come with me," said Venn, after telling Arthur what he had learned—"come with me, and see Madame de Guyon. She would like it."

Arthur went. Madame de Guyon received him with a curious air of interest.

"You are like your father," she said; "but more like poor Adrienne, your mother. May I call you Arthur? You know the whole sad story, Arthur. At this length of time, thinking what I was, in what school brought up, how utterly ignorant, I have brought myself to look upon the past as few women with such a memory could. I can now, as you see, even talk about it. Have you seen Philip lately?"

"I never see Philip at all."

"I am sorry. Mr. Venn has told me all the story. I am permitted to see my son's wife. I even hope that she may come to live with me. But this estate must be given back. It is not Philip's. Cruel as the blow would be, I would even consent to go into a court and relate my own history, if necessary, rather than let this wrong be done you."

"Philip has offered to restore the estate," said Arthur; "but he may keep it. Be at ease, madame; there will be no steps taken, and Philip may enjoy what the forgeries of MacIntyre have given him."

"I am glad. Put yourself only in my place, Arthur. After five and twenty years of effort I am rich, I am looked up to, I have a good name."

"Indeed you have," said Arthur.

"What if all were to be lost at a blow?"

"It shall not, madame—it shall not be lost at all. Keep what you have, the reputation that is your own. Rest assured that none of us will ever harm it."

What Marie said about her reputation was less than the truth. Of all great singers none had become so widely known for her

thousand acts of charity and grace; none had a better name; none lived a life more open and observed of all. But she was not satisfied with this. She wanted to have, if she could, the friendship of Madeleine and the love of Laura.

She wrote to Madeleine:—

"You know all my life—its beginning and its progress. You, a girl of Palmiste, can understand what I was thirty years ago, when I was sixteen years old. I was born a slave—white as I was in complexion. My mother was a slave, and therefore I was one. My people were forbidden to marry by law—God's laws set aside for man's purposes. They could not hold property; they were not allowed to wear shoes; they were publicly flogged in the Place; they were not allowed to read and write. When I was eight years old, the emancipation came. But though we were free, the old habits of slave life rested with us. Think of these, if you can, for you are too young to know much about what we were. Think of what you do know, and then ask what punishment I deserve for two years of sin. Believe me, every year that has elapsed since has been a year of punishment, never so heavy as now, when my son has cast me off. You know what a position I have conquered for myself; you know, too—I write it with a pride that you will appreciate—that no breath of calumny or ill report has been cast upon me during all this time. No one knows who I am, what I was. I wish that no one should know. Why do I write to you? It is because you have been kind to my daughter, my little Laura, and because you are engaged to Arthur Durnford. Years ago—the last time I saw his father—I took the two children, my Philip and Arthur, out of their beds, one after the other. Philip turned from me and cried; Arthur laid his arms round my neck and went to sleep. It was an omen. Part of it has been fulfilled. *Let the rest be fulfilled.* I ask for Arthur's friendship. I—yes, I—ask you for your friendship. It is because I hear you are unlike other girls—independent, able to think for yourself—that I dare to ask it. And I ask it for the sake of Laura, as well as myself. I want to take her to my own heart. I am a lonely woman, and hunger for somebody to love me. I cannot do this unless her friends—you, and Arthur, and all—will come to my house. Tell me

you can, after these years of repentance, give me your hand. Cannot a woman ever be forgiven by other women?"

Madeleine read the letter with burning cheeks. Why should she not go to see this poor woman, shut out from the world by a thirty years old sin, that was itself but ignorance?

But she must keep her secret.

She gave the letter to Arthur to read.

"What will you do, Madeleine?"

"I will do what you wish, Arthur."

"What would you like to do? Is it to go and see her? My dear, if you only knew, she is the best of good women."

So Madeleine went.

All this time Lollie was slowly recovering her strength, under the motherly care of Sukey.

When she got strong enough to go out, Hartley thought Philip's promise should be fulfilled. He approached the subject very delicately one day.

"I have been thinking, Lollie," he said, "that in case of any legal difficulties about your marriage—"

"What legal difficulties, Mr. Venn?"

"You see, my child, a ceremony perfectly binding in all other respects may very possibly not be in accordance with the law as regards succession to property, and so forth."

"But what have I to do with succession to property?"

"A good deal, Lollie. And I, as your guardian, must protect your interests. The best way will be for us to have the marriage done over again."

"Over again! But then Philip would have to be there."

"Philip will be there. He has expressed his readiness to be there. You need not be alarmed, Lollie," for she began to shiver from head to foot. "He will just come for the ceremony, and go away immediately afterwards. You will not even speak to him, nor he to you. All that is arranged. I know, Lollie, child, how painful all this is to you; but it must be done. Believe me, it is for your own sake."

She acquiesced. If Hartley Venn had told her to go straight to the guillotine, she would have done it for his sake.

The necessary arrangements were made. An old college friend of Venn's undertook to marry them, being just told that the cir-

cumstances were peculiar, and that he was to ask no questions.

And then Madeleine wrote to Philip :—

"MY DEAR PHILIP—You will be prepared to go through the marriage ceremony of the Church of England the day after to-morrow, at eleven o'clock, at — Church, — Square. It has been explained to Laura, to save her self-respect, that this will be done in the view of possible legal difficulties. She is growing stronger and better, and will, as soon as she is able to be moved, go to reside with Madame de Guyon. For everybody's sake—for hers as well as ours—old histories will be left alone, and no steps will be taken to convict the forger who deceived us all. Keep the estates of Fontainebleau, dear Philip, and be happy. You have promised to do everything I asked you for Laura. You will first marry her legally; you will then take her into the vestry alone, and ask her forgiveness. You cannot refuse that. I hope that as the years move on, you may be inclined to love each other again, and to forget the wrongs and woes of the past. I love your wife every day the more I see her.

"There is one more point I should like to ask you, if I may. It is of Madame de Guyon. You know what I would ask you, and I will not name it. Oh, Philip, if it is a good thing, as people write, for a man to be rich in woman's love, how rich ought you to be! Think of all this, and do what your heart prompts you.

"You will see me at the church.—Your affectionate sister, "MADELEINE."

But the letter reached Philip at a wrong moment, when he was in one of his bitter moods, and he only tore it up and swore.

Nevertheless, he kept his promise.

It was a bitterly cold morning in January, with snow upon the ground, and icicles hanging from every projection. Sukey knew nothing of the business on hand, and was only astonished when Madeleine came at ten o'clock, and took out Laura in her carriage, wrapped up as warmly as could be managed. Hartley Venn and Madame de Guyon joined them at the corner of the street, and the conspirators drove to the church.

This was the most difficult thing of any that Laura had yet been called upon to do. She had made up her mind never to see her

husband again. Now it had all to be gone over just as before. She remembered that last scene, when, after words sharper than any steel, Philip fell crying at her feet as she left the room, praying her to come back and let all be as it was. But this could never be. She knew it could never be. All the little ties that grow up between lovers—the tendrils that bind soul to soul, growing out of daily thought and daily caresses—were snapped and severed at a stroke. The ideal had been destroyed at one blow; even its ruins seemed vanished and lost. Philip had more of her pity now than of her love. No more her gallant and noble lover, the crown and type of all loyalty and honour, but degraded and fallen, his spurs shook off, his scutcheon smirched—a recreant knight. She had forgiven him. Perhaps, too, love might have been born out of forgiveness: a rose-bush beaten to the ground will put up one or two branches and blossom again. And woman's love, like God's, continues through sin, and shame, and disgrace. And then, another thing. She had lived a different life. The three women who were now her companions and friends—Madeleine, Marie, and Sukey—each in her own way, had taught her what Hartley Venn could never do: how women look on things; how great had been her own sin in keeping her secret from Hartley. So, as she grew stronger, her face changed: she passed from a girl to a woman, and her beauty grew, so to speak, stronger and more real.

Hartley led her up the aisle. There were no bridal veils, no bridesmaids, no pealing organ. She kept her eyes on the ground; but she knew Philip was standing, pale and agitated, by the altar.

The clergyman came out.

A strange wedding. The clerk and the pew-opener stared with open eyes at each other; for the bride stood before the altar, like a culprit—pale, thin, tearful, shivering. Beside her Venn, his smooth cheek flushed with suppressed fury, as he stood face to face with the destroyer of his happiness. All his philosophy, his acceptance of the inevitable, his resignation to fate, seemed useless now to stay the angry beating of his heart. But for the presence of the women he might have broken out then and there. Behind Laura, another, more deeply moved than any of the rest—the mother of the bridegroom. With her, Madeleine, anxious that there should be, above all, no scene—the

only one present to whom the whole ceremony did not appear a kind of strange, wild dream.

As for Philip, he stood, at first defiantly, looking straight at the clergyman; and but for the hot flush upon his face you might have thought him careless. Madeleine looked at him, and knew otherwise. Presently he had to kneel. Then, open as natures such as his are to every kind of influence, the words of the prayer fell upon his dry heart like rain upon a thirsty soil, and he was touched, almost to tears, by pity and sorrow for the gentle girl at his side. But not by love.

They stood up, face to face. For the second time their hands were joined with solemn words; and Laura started when she heard the voice of Philip—low and sad, as it seemed—saying, after the clergyman, the words prescribed by the Church.

They were pronounced man and wife.

Philip took her by the hand, and led her into the vestry, shutting the door.

He placed a chair for her, and stood in front. The church service had softened him, and the better nature was again uppermost.

"Laura," he said, "I promised Madeleine to remove any doubts that might exist in any mind by going through this ceremony. That is done. We are now married so that no one can say a word against the legality of our union. But one thing remains. I have done you cruel wrong. Will you forgive me?"

"Yes, Philip, I have forgiven."

"Freely and fully?"

"Long since, Philip—long since."

"We ought never to have met, child. Tell me again, that I may take the words away with me, that you forgive me."

"Philip, in the sight of God, I forgive all and everything."

"We must part, Laura, now—at all events, for the present. It is best so, is it not? I shall travel. We will not even write to each other. I have not forgiven myself. Kiss me once, my wife."

She stood up and kissed him on the lips, her tears raining on his cheeks. Then Philip opened the door and stepped into the church, where the clerk was standing open-mouthed at this extraordinary conduct.

"There are some papers to sign, I believe," he said.

They all went into the vestry. Philip signed.

"I have done what I promised, Madeleine."

Madeleine made a gesture in the direction of Madame de Guyon, who was bending over Laura.

"You have no word for her," she whispered.

He turned to his mother, hesitated a moment, then raised her hand and kissed it. She threw her arms about his neck and kissed him passionately, whispering—

"Philip, my son, come back to us soon."

He freed himself gently, placed her in a chair, and took his hat. Then he saw Hartley.

"You are Mr. Venn?" he said. "I cannot ask your forgiveness—that would be too preposterous. I leave my wife in your hands."

He left the vestry, and strode down the aisle. They heard his footsteps out of the church door, and down the street outside. Then they, too, left the church, and drove away in Madeleine's carriage to Madame de Guyon's house.

"He asked me to forgive him, maman," said Laura, sobbing in her arms. "He told me he was sorry. Let us pray for him together."

"This," said the clerk to the old woman who assisted—"this here is the most extraordinary and rummest wedding I ever see. First, the young man he comes half an hour early. I told him to look at the clock. 'Damn the clock,' he said, begging your pardon, Mrs. Trigg. Such was his blasphemious words, and in a church! He didn't give you much, I suppose, Mrs. Trigg? You aint a great deal richer for this precious morning's work?"

"Not a brass farthing!"

"Ah! they *call* themselves gentlefolks, I suppose. It's a queer way to begin married life by giving the church people nothing, let alone quarrelling before ever they come near the place! However, I dessay there's nothing absolutely illegal in not giving the clerk and the pew-opener their just and lawful dues. But it looks bad. It looks very bad. Mark my words, Mrs. Trigg. There will be no blessin' on this wedding."

CHAPTER XL.

SO Philip went his way, and they heard no more of him for a time. But a change was coming over the unhappy young man. A change for the worse. He was,

as has been seen, of that light and unstable character whose good and evil never seem to end their contest, whose owner is able at one moment to resolve the highest and noblest things, and at the next to fall into the lowest and basest actions. Does this come from the fatal African blood? God forbid that we should say so. But surely it may be helped for the worse by the presence of a constant suspicion of inferiority. It is self-respect that makes men walk erect, and in a straight line. We who sin are men who esteem ourselves but lightly. Sinners there are who think no small beer of themselves—rather the finest and oldest Trinity Audit; but they are those who have framed themselves a special code of honour and morality. And, if we called things by their right names, we should not use the idle metaphors of the common jargon, saying of a man that he wants ballast, bottom, backbone, staying power, energy, but we should say that he wants self-respect. This is the quality that makes a man Senior Wrangler, Victoria Cross, K.C.B., Mayor of his town, Deputy Grand of the Ancient Order of Druids, or any other distinction we long for. This is what inspires industry, pluck, perseverance, confidence—everything. Dear friends, and fathers of families, make your sons conceited, vain, proud, self-believers, encourage confidence. Never let them be snubbed or bullied. See that they walk head erect and fist ready. Inspire them with such a measure of self-esteem as will make them ready to undertake anything. If they fail, as is quite likely, no matter. They would have failed in any case, you see; and they have always their conceit to fall back upon. Lord John Russell is a case in point. Ready to command the Channel Fleet—you know the rest of it. I know a man—the stupidest, piggiest-headed, most ignorant, most conceited, and most inflated bloater of a man you ever saw. This creature, by sheer dint of conceit and vanity, which made him step calmly to the front, and stand there *just as if he were in his right place*, has a great house at South Kensington, and is director of a lot of companies. He is also, save the mark, a Fellow of the Royal Society. He got this, I know, by asking for it; and they were so astonished by the request that they gave him the distinction by mistake. He sent in his name with all the letters of the alphabet after it—those degrees which you can get for two guineas a year or thereabouts

—F.A.S., F.B.S., F.C.S., F.D.S., &c.; and then F.R.A.S., F.R.B.S., F.R.C.S., &c.; and after the names there came the words, in great capitals, AUTHOR OF THE WORK ENTITLED "ON THE TRITURATION OF IGNEOUS PARTICLES." You see, he once rubbed a couple of sticks together to try and make a fire, after the manner of the barbarians, and failed to do more than bark his own knuckles. Then he wrote a pamphlet, in six pages, on the subject. This was his Work, to which he refers whenever a scientific point is mooted.

Pardon me, reader—whenever I think of that man and this subject, I am carried away with an irrepressible enthusiasm and admiration.

Graviora canamus. It is an easy thing to write of a man's downward course—but a sad thing. Poor Philip, seeing sometimes the things he had done in their true and real characters, was afflicted with a sense of shame and disgrace that became so strong as to drive him back upon himself. He left off going to the club. That is to say, he left off going among his fellow-men at all. He had no friends, except club friends. Occasionally he might be met, but not in the daytime, wandering carelessly along the streets. For he could not sleep at night, and used to tire himself by long, lonely walks, and then get home to his rooms at three in the morning, and go to bed exhausted. Presently, two devils entered into him and possessed him. The first was the demon of drink. He began to drink in the morning; he went on drinking all day. At night he was sodden, and could sleep.

All this was not done in a day. A man who begins to live by himself in this great London, where it is so easy, soon drops into the habit of ceasing to care for any society. The streets are society—the long and multitudinous streets, with the roar of the carriages and the faces of the people. The streets inspired Dickens, who would come up from the country to London, and find in the streets the refreshment that he needed. The streets possessed the soul of De Quincey. To me there is no exhibition in the world comparable to Regent-street at four, or to the Strand all day long. I know a man who dropped some years since into this lonely life. He goes nowhere now; he

cares to go nowhere. He dines every day at the selfsame seat and the selfsame place, on the selfsame dinner. Then he goes back to his chambers, smokes a cigar, and presently to bed. In the daytime he goes up and down the streets.

Philip, in his bitter moods, began by going less often to the club, so that he gradually dropped out of the set. He was no longer to be depended on for a rubber. His face was missed at the nightly pool. No more bets were to be got out of him. And then he ceased to go there at all.

It was at this period, during February and March, that another fancy took him. He found out from the Directory where Madame de Guyon lived. It was in one of those houses that lie so thickly round the north of Regent's Park. One night he walked up there after dinner. It was a house with a little garden-ground under the windows. One room, the drawing-room, was lighted up. The blinds were not down, and the curtains not drawn. Philip stood on the pavement, and looked in through the railings. The party inside consisted of two ladies—his mother and his wife—and a man, Hartley Venn. Venn was lying lazily in an easy-chair; Madame Guyon was sitting opposite to him, knitting; Lollie sat in the middle, reading aloud. Philip heard her voice. She had one of those sweet, rich voices—not strong—which curl round a man's heart like the tendrils of a vine. I hate a woman with a loud voice, and I hate a woman who whispers. He could not hear what she read, but he listened to the voice, and tried to remember the past. All that blind, mad passion was dead. There was left in his heart the *power*, like a seed waiting for the spring, of waking to a higher and purer love. And now he seemed to know her better, and acknowledge within himself that she was every way worthy of the best love a man can bring.

He stood without, in the rain and cold, looking on the quiet happiness within. Presently, Madame de Guyon went to the piano, and began to sing. Her glorious voice filled the little room to overflowing, and welled forth in great waves of sound. Philip clutched the railings, and pressed his cheek against the iron. This was his mother: this glorious queen among women, this empress of song. There was the peaceful retreat waiting for him. He knew he had but to knock at the door. It was like Bunyan's

way to Heaven: to knock at the door was enough.

Then the younger lady took the elder's place and began to play—some of the old things he knew, that she had so often played to him. She played on, with her head thrown back, in that attitude of careless grace which he had never seen in any other woman, with lips half parted, eyes half closed, while the music rose and fell beneath her fingers, and flowed, like the rising tide among the caves, within her soul. Then she, too, stopped; and Venn got up and shook hands with both. He passed out, and crossed to the other side of the street; but did not notice the man standing against the railings, with straining eyes, staring within.

Then the blind was drawn down. A bell rang. Some one—his wife—played an evening hymn. They sang. Then a monotonous voice for a few minutes, and presently the lights were extinguished. They had prayed, and were gone to bed. But they prayed for him. And as he stood there, after the lights were extinguished, there were two women, in two rooms, each on her knees by the bedside, praying for him again—his mother and his wife. Then he came to himself, and walked back as fast as he could, trying to pull himself together.

Two or three nights afterwards, he went up again. This time there were no lights. All was dark. He waited till past eleven, walking backwards and forwards in the road. Then a carriage drew up, and he saw them descend and enter the house. They had been to the theatre, and were laughing and talking gaily. That night he went home in a rage. What right had they to be happy without him?

But he went up again. Sometimes the blinds were left up, and he saw the group. Oftener, blinds and curtains were drawn, and he could only hear the voices, and the sound of the piano. He knew well enough which of the two was playing; and also got to know—which filled his soul with inexpressible pangs of rage and jealousy—that Venn was there about four nights in the week.

All this time he was drinking hard, and living entirely alone. One night he went to bed earlier than usual—about one o'clock—and, contrary to his usual practice, went to sleep at once. At three o'clock he awoke with a shudder and a start. Opening his eyes wide, he saw, sitting by the side of the

bed—in fact, on his own pile of clothes—a skeleton. Not a skeleton of the comic order, with a pipe in his mouth, such as we are fond of drawing, but of the entirely tragic and melancholy kind: with his mouth open wide, from ear to ear, as if it was a throat cut an inch and a half too high up; a long, bony hand that pointed straight at him, and shook its finger in anger; eyes that glared with a horrid earnestness; bones, all the way down, that seemed transparent. Solitude makes men nervous: drink makes them see skeletons. Philip sat up and glared. Then he gave a half cry, and buried his head under the clothes.

Presently he looked out again. The skeleton was gone. He turned round with a sigh of relief. The skeleton was *on the other side*. Then he covered his head again, and waited till daybreak—till past six o'clock. By that time the spectre was gone.

The next night he did not dare to go to bed again. And then it was that the second devil, of whom I have spoken above, took possession of him. This time it was the demon of play. Philip, who knew everything about London, was not ignorant of the existence of one or two places—where, indeed, he had more than once been—where you may find a green table, dice, and other accessories to the gambling table. To one of these he went that night at one o'clock. There were two or three of his club acquaintances there, who greeted him as one newly returned from some long foreign travel.

He got through the night so. And saw no spectre when he awoke at midday.

Then he began to frequent the place regularly. It seemed to him the only place where pleasure could be found. At the age of six and twenty this young man found the fruits of the world turned in his mouth to dust and ashes. He had no longer any ambition or any hope. The long night spent over the chances of the game gave him light, companionship, excitement. To keep his head clear, he gave up the brandy and water of the day. So far this was a gain. But then he took to champagne at night, and drank too much of it. As for the play, whether he lost or won made no difference, because he never lost heavily; and fortune favoured him by giving him neither great coups nor great reverses.

This kind of thing went on for a couple

of months or so. He grew thin, pale, excitable. He had not the moral courage even to go among men at all, never went anywhere except to the gaming table—except when he walked up to Regent's Park to catch a glimpse of the home he had abandoned. The sight of it, the occasional sight of its inhabitants, was like a lash of scorpions. If he saw them happy, his blood boiled with jealousy and rage. If he thought they looked depressed, he ground his teeth together, and cursed himself for the cause.

At first he used to have mighty yearnings of spirit, and was moved to knock at the door and ask admittance. These emotions being suppressed, day after day, grew gradually of less strength. Then he ceased to think of any change at all; and went on moodily—without any of that singing and dancing of which he spoke to Madeleine—down the slope of Avernus, the bottom of which was not far off.

He had laid his skeleton by the process of changing his hours altogether. But it was only laid for a time. Youth will stand a good deal; but there is a point beyond which you may not go. Then a disordered liver, an unhealthy brain, a nervous excitement, produce discomforts of a very rude and practical kind. There came a time, early in April, when his sleep was so tormented with terrible dreams, and his waking hours with terrible thoughts—thoughts that he knew could belong to no sound brain, and sights that he knew to be unreal or supernatural—that he went to a doctor, and humbly asked assistance.

"What have you been doing?"

"Nothing. Smoking, drinking, living alone, and gambling. Everything that is bad."

"Leave it all off. Go into society."

"The only society I can go into is the society of men who do these things."

"You have money? Good. Then go away. That is the only thing I can do for you. Live temperately, and go away."

"Where am I to go to?"

"Go? Go anywhere. As far as you can. Take a long sea voyage. Come back after it—say in two years' time—and we will see how you are. If you stay here and go on drinking, you will probably be dead in six months."

"What does it matter if I am?"

"Pardon me, my dear sir. My business

is to prolong life, not to examine into the desirability of preserving it. Most of my patients prefer to live. Doubtless, they consider the chances of a change dubious."

Philip went away relieved. He would go away and travel. The new thought occupied his mind all day; and for that night he slept soundly, and if skeletons danced in his room, as they did sometimes, he was asleep and did not see them.

Where to go?

He awoke in the morning asking himself the question. And then a happy thought struck him. He would go away for good and all; he would get out of a country where all the memories were miserable to him. The past should be shaken off like an old garment. He would begin a new life; he would go and live on his own estate—Arthur's, by right, said his conscience—in Palmiste.

His thoughts flew to the old place. He felt again the warm breath of the summer air; he sat in the shade, deep down in the ravine, where the cool dash and splash of the mountain stream made sweet music in his ears; roamed the forest, gun in hand, while the branches sighed in the breeze. He saw the hilltops purpling at dawn, and the heavy dew lying in great beads upon the roses. He heard the shrill voices of the coolies, and watched the Indian women pass by, with their lithe, graceful figures and their scarlet robes. And all at once a wild longing came over him to be there, and at peace.

All day long he went about, radiant with the new thought. He drove to Silver's, and ordered a lot of things to be put together at once. He drove to his agent's, and told him what he was going to do. He ascertained that the steamer left Southampton in three days, and he took his passage.

Then he went home, and dreamed of the future.

There, in that land where it is always afternoon, peace would come to him at last, and conscience be still. A pleasant life lay before him—a life of ease and dignity. He would be a judge among the people of his estate, as his father had been before him; he would be the giver and dispenser of hospitality. He would leave behind him, and forget for ever, the two women who could be happy while he was wretched. Arthur, the wronged—all against whom he

had sinned. He would forget them all, and be happy.

Alas! "*Cœlum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare currunt.*"

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—X.

SEATED round the fire again, Pat began his story, which I take the liberty of calling—

BLACK THURSDAY, AND A NIGHT IN STONY HOLLOW.

You, Charlie and Harry, have both heard of, and no doubt remember, "Black Thursday;" but Bill may not have done so. I am not quite certain what year it was, but I think it was in the summer of '48 and '49 that what I am about to relate took place. The spring had been very dry, and the scarcity of water was very great—more so than I ever remember it to have been before or since. Many stations were entirely without any water, and were in consequence obliged to drive their flocks to the nearest rivers and creeks. This made "feed" nearly as scarce as water, and thousands of both sheep and cattle died—in some places, their bodies strewn the ground as thickly as if they had been purposely collected and slaughtered by the hand of man. The little water-holes were full of dead cattle, either drowned or trampled to death by the eager, thirsty mob rushing headlong into the water to quench their burning thirst. A ride along the banks of any of these creeks was anything but pleasant, the stench arising from so many dead, putrid animals during the intense heat of a more than ordinary warm Australian summer, being overpowering and sickening in the extreme. As the summer went on the heat increased; and, to complete the grass famine, the bush got on fire—whether set on fire by some accident or by malice was never known—and the parched country, dried to tinder by the long-continued heat and drought, was in flames, blazing for miles and miles, burning and destroying the little grass which had escaped the scorching rays of the sun.

That was a sad, unfortunate time for many a settler who had been slaving and toiling for many a weary year, leading a life of privation and hardship in order to procure a comfortable home for his family, and to save a little for his own old age; and who

now saw his flocks of sheep and herds of cattle dying by hundreds around him, unable to assist them, and helpless to avert his own ruin. At the time I mention, I was only a little boy of about ten years of age; but, accustomed to a bush life ever since I knew anything, I was as able as any man to do all sorts of "up-country" work not requiring physical strength—such as riding after cattle and horses, shepherding, holding a gate when drafting was going on in the sheep-yards, picking up fleeces during shearing time, and numerous other jobs for which an active boy was as well, and often better, adapted than a man. Many a long day I have sat in the saddle from sunrise to sunset, hunting for stray cattle; and my greatest enjoyment was to make one of the party when the general yearly muster of cattle took place at any of the stations in our neighbourhood. Then, mounted on my pet pony, Vanish—a neat, wiry chestnut, very fast and enduring, a first-rate stock horse; one of the right sort, that could turn in its own length when going its fastest; never at a loss for a spare leg in broken ground, and able to jump a four-foot log—I made my appearance in all the glory of boots and breeches, cabbage tree hat, loose jumper, and flowing necktie; armed with a stock-whip three times as long as myself, ready to take and hold my place against the best man there. And, truly, with my light weight, something under six stone, there were few who could leave me behind; and my delight was supreme if I managed to "cut down" any of the grown-up men. One boy and I had many a hard bout trying to "pound" each other, and many a severe fall we each got in the attempt. On one occasion, I led over a high log, and, on clearing it, found I had jumped into a hole formed by the upturn root of a tree. Of course my pony and I went head over heels, a tremendous cropper. Jumping up, I shouted to my companion to follow me; and seeing that he wisely rather hesitated, I insisted that if he was afraid to do so he must acknowledge himself beaten. This he would not do, however; and at last, overpowered by the logic of my argument, or angered by my teasing and laughing at him, he rode at it full tilt, and, doing as I had done, fell with a fearful crash into the hole. There he lay, as senseless as a log. What a fright I was in! I made certain he was dead, and I never felt so happy in my life

as when he opened his eyes again. He had, however, broken his arm; and this result of my stupidity cured me for ever of trying to lead other fellows into grief when larking.

I was staying on my uncle's station near the Murray River; and being only a visitor there during the mustering time, I was allowed more freedom than I got at home. My usual amusement was riding out with one of the stockmen in his daily rounds after his cattle. He was very busy just then trying to collect as many small lots as he could, and joining them to the main mob, so as to save time and trouble when the general muster—which was fixed for the following week—took place. This man was better than the usual style of stockmen, and was well educated, spoke well, and did not think it necessary to be constantly using profane and brutal language in order to give force and expression to his words; and therefore my uncle made no objections to my being so much with him. He told me he had been at one of the best schools in England—Winchester, I think he said—but that his father dying, and leaving all his money to his elder brother, he had been compelled to work for his living; and having emigrated to Australia, preferred the free, out-of-door life of a stockman to the close, confined drudgery of a clerk in a stuffy office. He was a long, thin, spare-built fellow, and from his having reddish hair and whiskers, went by the name of Red Bill.

On the morning of the memorable Thursday which was to become so famous, or rather infamous, in the history of Victoria, Red Bill and I started off on our usual round, having orders to ride across country towards the bush fire, and see what direction it was burning in. For days there had been no wind, and so the fire was burning slowly but steadily, quietly but surely gaining strength, and spreading, although not taking any very decided course. Indications of a hot wind, or nor'-wester, were now visible, and my uncle was seriously alarmed on this account. The bush fire, being to the north of his run, would, if the hot wind came on, probably sweep every blade of grass off, and burn many of his cattle and sheep, scattering the others all over the country, and cause a great loss of time and much trouble in collecting them again.

That Thursday, so well deserving of its name of Black Thursday, was the hottest

day of an exceptionally hot summer. The air, heavy and close, was rendered more than ever stifling by the dense clouds of smoke which hung like a fog over the whole country. As we rode slowly through the bush, at a foot's pace, our horses bathed in perspiration and lathered with sweat, we were struck and almost awed by the complete and unnatural silence around us. Everything seemed dead; all was quiet as the grave. A stillness deeper, more profound than the darkest night produces, had taken possession of and reigned in solemn majesty over the sombre bush. No bright-plumaged birds flitted from tree to tree across our path; no kangaroos were as usual to be seen playing and gamboling with their young, and flying with long, lurching leaps at our approach. No living thing was to be seen, save now and then a dark, shining, glistening snake, twisting rapidly away from us, scarcely rustling the dry, dead leaves in its quiet, cunning course.

We, too, seemed to share in the general depression. An unaccountable feeling of oppression—a heaviness of spirit—hung over us, and we spoke little, and in low, suppressed tones. A deep sense of loneliness—an indefinable feeling of dread, such as one sometimes experiences when riding alone in a moonlight night, through deep bush, or in gloomy mountain passes—appeared to have cast a spell over us; and we rode slowly forward on our silent way towards the fire, spiritless and dejected.

Mile after mile we rode on in silence, at the same slow pace, and it was long past midday before we reached the fire we had been sent to examine. When we got to it, there seemed to me to be little cause for alarm, as it was burning slowly among the short, dry grass, looking like a little thread twisting over the ground. Red Bill, however, appeared to be of a different opinion, and looked serious and anxious. He pointed out to me the lurid appearance of the sky, and the many other signs of a hot wind, and assured me that if the wind came and blew violently, it would take us all our time to keep out of reach of the flames. He spoke so earnestly that he quite frightened me—remember, I was a mere child—and I proposed that we should return at once. This he agreed to do; but suggested that as we had water—there was a creek close to us—and fire, we might as well have a drink of tea first. Accordingly,

we hobbled our horses, and let them feed about, leaving our saddles on their backs, and sat down to enjoy our tea. After a long, tiresome ride on a close, sultry day, I know nothing so refreshing and so lastingly invigorating as a good pannikin of strong tea. It is far before all the grog or wine in the world; it imparts an energy and gives a strength and life of an honest, trustworthy nature, which grog is incapable of, without muddling the brain or stupefying the senses, as is certain to be the result of the free use of other stimulating drinks. And so, by the time Red Bill and I had finished our first quart pot and brewed another, we felt in better spirits, and were chatting away as freely as usual.

It was just about sunset when we caught our horses, and, taking their hobbles off, prepared to start on our homeward journey, preferring to ride in the cool of the evening rather than getting home earlier by toiling on in the heat of such a sweltering day. As we were mounting, we were startled by hearing a sudden roaring, rushing sound, and turning round saw a great pillar, as it were, of smoke twirling high up above the tree-tops.

It was the first fierce, sudden gust of the hot wind. In another moment it was on us, hot and suffocating as the blast from a furnace, bringing with it clouds of smoke and ashes of burnt grass, making the air, which was before oppressive in the extreme, now stifling and almost unbearable. Instantly the effect was visible on the fire, as with a roaring, crackling noise, the flames burst out afresh, crackling along the ground with lightning-like rapidity, and leaping from tree to tree, consuming and destroying everything in its course, and leaving nothing but a black, smoking waste behind it.

Our position was one of the greatest danger. To face that great wall of fire which was so quickly advancing on us seemed certain death, and our only safety appeared to lie in flight. But in that suffocating, blinding cloud of smoke our horses would soon grow faint and worn out; and then, left to our own resources, the end would not be long delayed. Little time was there for hesitation or consideration. Already, in the few moments during which we stood still, confused and nearly terror-stricken, the fire had made rapid strides, and was now within a few hundred yards of us. Our terrified horses required little

encouragement from us to urge them forward, and galloped on, in wild haste, at a reckless pace which soon left the fire behind us. A couple of miles at this headlong speed, and we began to check our horses, and sobered down into the long, swinging canter peculiar to the Australian stock-horse. Fortunately for us, the grass near the banks of the creek along which we were riding was very thin, and trodden down by the large numbers of sheep and cattle which daily came to seek water there; and so the fire could not burn so fast as it otherwise would have done, and we began to think we had over-estimated our danger. But to reach the home station we had to leave the open flat through which the creek ran, and cross a thick scrub of low bushes, about two miles in width, and which, dried by the long-continued and intense heat, would blaze with fearful fury and the greatest rapidity. To make it still worse, we had to cross it right in front of the bush fire, which, all the time we were forcing our way through the close set bushes, would be coming straight down on us. We were, therefore, anxious to get as far as possible ahead of the fire before we left the open and turned into the scrub, where, of course, we should not be able to make any very great speed. Nearly in the middle of this scrub there was a large deep hollow, a sort of natural basin, which in wet weather was filled with water, but was now, of course, perfectly dry and bare of everything. Nothing ever grew in it, as there was no soil, the bottom being composed of loose shingle and a few large rocks lying here and there, looking as if they had been rolled into the pit for some special reason. It was a curious-looking place—a strange spot to find in the middle of a flat scrub. Whether made by the hands of men for some unknown purpose, or the result of some convulsion of nature, no one knew; but the Stony Hollow was well known to every one in that part of the country, being a sure find for stray cattle in the winter, on account of there often being water in it.

As we left the open flat and began to make our way slowly through the thick scrub, the sun sank down, looking dismally weak and yellow through the dense smoke which hung around us; and almost immediately the light seemed to fade away, and darkness spread swiftly over us. Still, we had no difficulty in finding our way, only we

were compelled to move somewhat more slowly, and with greater caution, in order to save our horses from stumbling, and perhaps falling, over the many fallen branches which lay hidden amongst the rank grass and bushes. Every moment the heat became greater and the smoke thicker, and we could hear the crackling of the fire distinctly as it came closer and closer to us. Now and then a huge flame would leap high up, sending a bright gleam of light across our path, and illuminating the dark forest, giving a strangely picturesque effect to the gloomy scene around us. Nearer and nearer came the fire to us, sweeping and devouring everything in its angry course, until we saw that it was impossible for us to get through the scrub before the fire caught us. And yet to retrace our steps was nearly, if not equally, dangerous; for we were now almost in the middle of the scrub, and we could hardly expect to gain any time by doing so. Hurriedly and excitedly we talked it over. Both were too much frightened to argue the matter over coolly or deliberately, and each moment hot blasts of air warned us how little time we had left for decision. To force our way out of that thick scrub before the raging fire overtook us appeared impossible. Would it not be better to face it, and boldly rush through the scorching flames, and take the chance of getting through safely. This seemed our best, in fact our only chance, and we made up our minds to try it.

Suddenly an idea flashed across my mind, so simple that the wonder was that it had not suggested itself to either of us before.

"Bill, the Stony Hollow!" I cried, loudly. "Let us go there, and wait till the fire passes. There we shall be safe, as no fire can reach us in that hole."

Without a word, Red Bill turned his horse, and hurried off in the direction of the spot I had mentioned. As we got near it, the bush, before so quiet, so destitute of all signs of life, now appeared to be full of animals. Every few yards we saw wild cattle, kangaroos, and other natives of the forest hurrying forward, eager to escape from the cruel, relentless enemy which so pitilessly pursued them. At other times so timid and fearful of man, flying at the slightest sound of his approach, they now scarcely noticed us, and took no care to avoid us; their one terrible dread absorbing all their thoughts, and eclipsing all other and lesser fears.

On, on—no time now to pick our footsteps, every instant now is of priceless value! Never did horses push more willingly through a scrub than ours did now, stumbling, tripping, and all but falling at each step, blinded with smoke, and tortured with the burning heat. Not one moment too soon did we reach the hollow where we hoped to find safety, for as we rode down the steep sides of the gravelly pit, the fire burst out with redoubled fury close after us, and the heat and smoke became more intense and suffocating than ever.

The hollow where we now were was about seventy or eighty yards across, and nearly circular, being perhaps some twenty feet deep. Here, so far, we found less smoke, as it seemed to pass over our heads, and for a little time we were left in comparative comfort.

What a terribly grand sight it was! The whole forest blazed with a fierceness and fury I have never seen equalled in a bush fire before or since, and looked like an immense heaving sea of fire, as, making a roaring like the ocean waves breaking on a rocky coast, it leaped from bush to bush, bounding forwards like some furious animal on its prey. Well for us we had not tried to rush through that living wall of fire. No mortal thing could have done so and lived. Even now the heat was all but unbearable, and the blood in our veins seemed to boil, and our heads felt ready to burst.

Standing beside our horses, we tried to soothe and quiet them, but in vain; and at length, maddened with terror and excitement, they became perfectly ungovernable, and, breaking away from us, galloped off. What became of them we never knew. We saw them no more; but in all probability the fire overtook and consumed them.

Poor old Vanish!—what a sad ending was thine! As the fire came nearer, and nearly surrounded our little shelter, numbers of wild animals joined us. Kangaroo rats, 'possums, and even the senseless, stupid bandicoots crowded down the sides of the hollow. The larger animals seemed to seek shelter in flight—at least, none came near us. Snakes of all sorts, colours, and sizes, crawled about amongst them, unnoticed and uncared for, and showing little of their usual timidity.

The forest was now lighted up by the blaze, and every object was seen as distinctly as if the midday sun was shining brightly.

But gradually the smoke began to descend, and fill the hollow where we stood, already panting with heat and half-blinded with the showers of sparks which kept falling on and around us, and we began to fear we should be choked for want of air.

We were now in the centre of a huge fire, getting slowly roasted; and I do believe if the fire had not burnt quickly we should have been literally cooked alive, like young pigs, in a Maori copper. But the very fury of the fire, whilst it added to our sufferings for the time, saved our lives; for the flames, burning with the greatest rapidity, soon ran past us, leaving a black waste behind, lighted up by the blazing of fallen logs and dead trees.

Long after the fire had passed us, we could hear it crashing and roaring through the scrub, and see the flames bursting out fiercely at intervals. But slowly and gradually these signs of destruction died away, and darkness and quietness again reigned around. Never have I seen such intense black, blind darkness as on that night. We could positively *feel* it. Now and then a feeble flame shot forth from some smouldering log, but only for a minute or two, and not sufficiently bright to allow us a view of what was around us.

Our position now was trying and horrible in the extreme. Left in complete darkness, so great that we could not see each other, although not a yard apart, surrounded by swarms of the most disgusting and deadly poisonous snakes, and afraid to move a foot for fear of treading on any of them, our excited and highly-wrought imaginations conjured up all sorts of disagreeable and terrible fancies, until I, for one, had the greatest difficulty in remaining still on the spot where I was. Every time I heard the slightest movement or rustle near me, a nasty, creepy sort of feeling came over me, and I felt the hair on my head stiffen as I thought of some loathsome reptile crawling beside me, and perhaps taking the liberty of making itself comfortable for the night by coiling its shining body on my feet.

Hour after hour we stood thus, waiting for the first glimpse of daylight. How late it seemed that morning—how eagerly we watched for the first little sign! Slowly at length it appeared; and then suddenly, as if to make amends for its previous tardiness, the sun burst out, smiling and bright, although shining on such a black scene of

desolation. Our companions in the Stony Hollow had nearly all taken their leave, and departed with the first rays of light, and nothing but a few iguanos and lizards were to be seen running about, and trying to hide themselves amongst the rocks and stones.

We got back to the station in time for breakfast, and found the houses, &c., all safe—the fire having passed without doing any harm to them. Our friends were preparing to hunt for us, but were not very uneasy at our night's absence, concluding we had gone to some neighbouring huts for shelter.

For weeks we hunted and searched for stray cattle, every day finding the charred and burnt remains of some of them, and often coming on mobs of sheep, huddled together in a heap, burnt to death. On one occasion we found the body of a man nearly consumed by the fire. Who he was we had no means of knowing, as he was too much burnt to be recognized; but probably he was some unfortunate tramp on the look-out for work.

"You had a hot time of it, Pat," says Walker, yawning and looking very sleepy—in fact, I believe he had been asleep, and had not heard much of Pat's tale. "I wouldn't mind having some of the heat you had then, here now to warm me. By Jove, it *is* cold! This Canterbury is the most miserable country for wood, or rather for the total absence of wood, I ever saw."

"Yes," I said, "if we could exchange some of our superabundance of water with Australia for wood, it would be a capital swap for both countries. But, after all, I would rather have water than wood, if only one is to be had at a time. Travelling in a hot climate, with a scorching sun beating on you, parched for want of drink, and no water for miles and miles, is worse than having to lie out in a cold night on the Canterbury Plains without a stick of firewood. It is possible to run about and get warm, but running about won't cure thirst, you know."

"It is wonderful what an amount of cold one can bear without feeling any evil consequences beyond the temporary discomfort," said Pat, as he began pulling off his boots preparatory to rolling himself up in his blankets for the night. "I have lain out at night here, with no shelter or covering but a single blanket, and no fire at all. In the first part of the night, perhaps, raining hard,

and towards morning freezing so sharply that my hair was quite frozen, and my wet blanket so stiff that it would nearly stand upright like a board; yet I never felt any the worse for it."

"You may not feel any evil effect from such exposure now," replied Bill; "but, depend upon it, you will do so sooner or late."

"A nice sort of Job's comforter you are, Bill," said Pat, laughing. "But let us turn in now. We will have a long day to-morrow crossing the cattle over the river. There's quite enough water in it to make it a troublesome job, if the cattle do not face it better than they did the Rangitata. What are you going to do, Charlie? Are you going straight on to Hokitiki, or will you try and sell in Christchurch?"

"I think I will go down to Christchurch, as soon as we have got across, and try to sell them," replied Stevens. "If I can get a fairish price, it will pay better than driving on. I never saw cattle travel so badly in my life as this mob does. They are losing condition so fast, that I really believe if we go on much farther they will be fit for nothing but lanterns."

"Get quit of them as soon as you can, Charlie," I said, lying down, "and you will do well. I suppose we shall have to stay at the other side of the river until you return. That's a nice amusement for us, certainly, with no firewood and very little feed for the cattle. Come back as quickly as you can, that's all."

THE DECAY OF COMPLIMENT.

IT is painful for a man with a lively sense of self-desert to think how compliments have dwindled nowadays. A large, satisfying mouthful of praise, such as some of our ancestors lived on daily, is now out of the question. Taste in the matter is getting starved—is failing us from mere disuse. As a last expiring effort of the sweet ancient flattery, a lover may still sometimes tell a lady that she is an angel; but he does not signify any particular angel. It is a general, half-emptied phrase, pointing to the winged rank and file. If she is a sensible woman, she can scarcely be expected to credit that a man using no more particularity than that really means what he says. The poor creatures' happier great-grandmothers were goddesses every time they got a letter, and

were angels up and down every page of it.

This was excess. The thing was so overdone that it got to be a pleasant and welcome change to call people simply men and women. But it seems to be overlooked that the uncomplimentary style wears bare as well as the complimentary, and all the sooner for being bald to begin with. The blunt, naked manner of mutual address is now with us about at the last thread. Whether or not society is aware of it, it is seriously suffering from a too great abatement of compliment: everybody is depressed by a sense of unrecognized merit. It is creditable to a certain mechanical morality to debate whether it is right or wrong to sign yourself "yours respectfully" when you have not the feeling. Cases of difficulty necessarily arise when you know persons intimately. But there are so many people with whom one has only a slight acquaintance. In all these instances, you are at full liberty to believe the very best of them. So, whose fault is it if respect is lacking? Not greatly to respect persons of whom you know nothing shows a wretchedly low state of the expectation of virtue. The old method of compliment was framed on just the other plan—it refused to anticipate lack of desert. Even its excesses—until they, too, got mechanical—did but mark an anxiety to avoid seeming not to expect enough from a man. It was a creditable error, and must have stimulated some persons to try and be better than they knew they were.

The French are praised for politeness, merely because they cling to the former practice we have given up. They credit strangers with possibilities of merit which naturally astonish some of the visitors crossing the Channel from this side. One result of their taking for granted the best on behalf of those of whom they do not know the worst, is that, if they find out their friends, there is always the great, strange public for them to be on good terms with. It would be difficult to say what an advantage this is. In England, simply from lack of a little habitual politeness, the great, ever-present, anonymous crowd with which we have so much more to do than with any individual, or with any inner circle, has no interest for us whatever. It is a thing to be scowled at, to be spoken harshly to, to be got out of the way of. A Frenchman takes off his hat to it; he has scraps of

pleasant chat with it; he finds it always ready to be amused—to be complaisant. In the East they don't make much of the crowd; but, at least, they do of the stranger. Here, if we positively and certainly knew that we were all rogues together, we could not shun one another more, nor allude to one another in more sparing fashion; while all we can plead for the system is its one single merit of being honest. The more the pity!

Then, it ought not to be forgotten how utterly that great and useful figure of speech, irony, is now struck out of our conversation. In days when a man was entitled to even so small a flourish as to be styled "respected sir," it was quite possible to read him a sermon in the way of uttering it. A fine protesting flash of the eye, with a certain judicious, hesitating tremor of the tongue, might suggest to him that he was spoken of in the sense of as he ought to be. There are persons now who would be startled at being addressed as respected—it would seem to them incredible, and might set them thinking. Unluckily, we have got down to the impracticable minimum of "sir," which only allows of slight variations of brutality of tone.

Conversation generally is admitted to be at a low ebb among us. Well it may be: it is all owing to this decay of compliment. In talking about things in general, as we now alone do, nobody is under any obligation to try and talk well, since no grievance arises if he fails. If a man bumbles about the education question, the education question does not show any displeasure, nor reply with an epigram of its own. It would be very different if the custom were to talk to one another of one another. Everybody would find their wits brightened. Speaking of one another now behind the back often develops highly intellectual qualities—some persons are never so smart as then; doing it face to face would necessarily polish speech: it would revive the lost arts of innuendo and retort. On the other hand, it would check egotism. People only talk about themselves in default of others doing it sufficiently for them: they are driven to it now because nobody else will say a word of them worth their hearing. But it is impossible for a man to say things of himself quite as well as others could say them of him. The most stupid knows it. He would always prefer others to do it, if they

only would. The most garrulous will instantly stop talking, and listen with pleasure, if the compliments another is paying him are high and good. However, this is against present usage, and the result is society is chilled to the core; we are all, more or less, at cross purposes, everybody feeling himself to be inadequately recognized.

For is there any greater daintiness in this world than a well-constructed, highly polished, delicately flavoured compliment? Imagine for a moment one of the highest order. A bright loop of fresh, living words, softly tossed from the tongue into the laughter-stirred air; the point, not too obvious for a single second, veiled in just a faint puzzle of covert allusion, glancing hither and thither round the circle; until the phrases suddenly shoot out a special sparkle, which directs the flash of wit upon your own head, enwrapping you in a momentary glitter that draws to you all admiring eyes—its being impromptu, and over in a moment, saving you from all shame of egotism. A supreme compliment of this sort is not to be looked for by everybody, nor could it be repeated every five minutes for the best of us; but pleasant, sensible praise could be found with a little trouble in looking for it. Keeping within the limits of decent truthfulness, things might be said of everybody each day which would sweeten the blood and hurry the pulse of the hearer till bedtime. No wonder we are mutually vexed with one another at seeing the splendid opportunities missed, time after time. One thing is absolutely certain, we shall never fully know the good qualities of one another till we set ourselves more liberally to tell one another of them; for then we must look for them, which at present we have no motive for doing. By means of a rational habit of compliment, an aristocracy of beauty, goodness, and wit is set up, making fixed, unvarying, political titles only a poor substitute for that better, always-fresh appraisal given voluntarily. But we have let all this go.

Compliments of a certain debased sort are, of course, interchanged among us now, in a hurried, ridiculous fashion. Men would get along very poorly wholly without them; women would not get along at all. But we now have to smuggle them in as if they were not quite proper. There is a miserable pretence that they are only half-meant, that it is a piece of fun. An honest, frank accept-

ance of a flattering phrase, and its leisurely enjoyment, is a forbidden luxury in private talk. If a compliment is to be paid you, you have to devour it openly, in utter publicity; for, as might have been expected, a weak artifice has been invented. Instead of its being enough for a man to tell you himself, in witty or gentle phrase, the good he thinks of you, with just the approving hum of the haphazard circle of overhearers at the moment, he is to keep dumb till a testimonial is got up—some substantial gifts which brazenly remain in your house after all pretence of goodwill in the donors may have vanished. It is true, words have been added; but in what way? A company having been assembled to hear you praised, a chairman is deputed to shout out ridiculous hyperboles, which no sane person can take to himself. The system of testimonials, of public dinners, of health-proposing, is a travesty of the true method of compliment. Such things are no right substitute for a free, temperate, gay use of mutual praise, made real by disciplined respect of manner, in ordinary life.

It is the absence of this which is regretted by worthy men, who are wise enough to know how well they deserve it, and how much they should enjoy it.

GUILTY OR NOT?

IN TWO PARTS.—II.

NEXT morning, Saturday, I was roused from sound sleep at about six o'clock by loud knocking at my room door. When I had realized that the noise was real, and not merely a dream, I asked what had happened, and was informed that two gentlemen were downstairs, having come to see me on important business, which they said would admit of no delay. I desired the servant to ask them to come up to my bed-room, if they would prefer this to waiting until I had dressed. The result of this was, that in two minutes Messrs. Greaves and Lawson, the two jurymen who had recognized me in the Court on the previous Thursday, had taken seats at my bedside, and were explaining what had brought them out so early. The evening before, each of them had been visited by Barton's wife, poor Norah, a pretty, delicate-looking young woman, meanly clad, and hardly able to get about from weakness, consequent, doubtless, on her recent illness and a long course of insufficient food. She

had not been able to get into town before, she said, or she would have tried in some way to summon friends to help her poor husband. She had only just heard the result of the trial, and was in a state bordering on frenzied despair about him. She vowed that Barton was innocent of the crime imputed to him; that Farrell had attacked him first with a sword; and that it was but to save his own life that her wretched husband had struck the blow which had proved so unfortunately fatal. She declared there were plenty of people to prove this if they only would come forward, but that everyone hated "himself" for being a Protestant, and for having killed a "good Catholic." She now, with tears and adjurations, entreated these two gentlemen, who had known and often helped her father in difficulties, to try and see justice done. If Barton were hanged, she declared, they would evermore have the guilt of slaying an innocent man on their souls.

"We have come now for help to you, sir," said Mr. Lawson. "We could neither of us get any rest last night, thinking the matter over. The woman has impressed us both with a belief in the truth of what she said; but what can we do to revise our verdict of yesterday evening? I fear it is a hopeless matter, unless you can think of anything to be done."

Of course, I could think of nothing. This was Saturday—on Monday the execution would take place. Even if we could find witnesses in Barton's favour, what time had we? At last, in despair of any course to pursue, I said I would go to the county gaol, and see the condemned man, if possible.

Having been left at last to myself, I dressed, made a hasty breakfast, and set off on my hopeless expedition. It was so early that the streets were quiet enough. I walked along meditating on the matter, with my head down, and my eyes on the paving stones, when a hand touched my arm.

"What is it?" I asked, with a start.

"It" was a working man—a porter attached to the business establishment of Mr. Lawson, who had so lately left me.

"I think, sir," the man said, "that I know the business you have come out about so early, for the master told me what he went to you for this morning. If you come to the shop, the foreman there has something to tell you that may be of use to Barton."

Of course, I lost no time in going with the man. Mr. Lawson's was an ironmongery shop, in Patrick-street. As the foreman came to his work that morning, he had overheard the beginning of a conversation between a countryman, who had just brought in a load of potatoes for sale in the market, and a friend who was helping him to unload his cart; and he had been so struck by some things they said, that he felt justified in loitering about to hear the end.

"Well, and what's the news wid you to-day, Tim Crowley?"

"Arrah, thin, nothin' at all, at all—only the Protestant Barton is to be hanged a Monday; though, atween ourselves, he only wanted a friend to speak for him, and tell the truth. Farrell—God rest his soul!—had a good blow at him first with a cane sword he had, and 'tis hard if a man mustn't strike for himself when a neighbour makes at him. 'Twasn't but a chance he hit too hard with the shovel."

"A cane sword, ye says! Ah, thin, where would Farrell git a cane sword?" asked the other, with great incredulity.

"'Tis myself ought to know that," answered Crowley, "for 't was from me he had it. Though I keeps only a forge when I'm at home at Lisafahan, I sometimes lends a friend a trifle for a consideration, and I lent a boy a shilling for that same sword first, and then I lent itself to poor Farrell for half-a-crown, when he came to tell me how Barton wanted to turn him out of his house with a pitchfork. I advised him to get something to protect himself—more's the pity!—and he took that of me."

Having heard a repetition of all this talk from the foreman, I then went, as I had originally intended, to the gaol, though with no definite idea as to what advantage could accrue from an interview with Barton. I found him looking the picture of abject despair and desolate grief, sitting in the corner of his cell, on his bed, his head sunk in his hands. It was with difficulty that I roused him sufficiently to tell me his story. I only succeeded by telling him of his wife's exertions on his behalf, and of how I was now seeking some means of aiding him, although I feared all efforts must, of necessity, be in vain. His eyes flashed with a wild gleam of excitement as I spoke, but he calmed down, and quietly told me his whole story, mentioning, of his own accord, how Farrell had rushed furiously on

him, flourishing a drawn sword—a cane sword; and that it was only then, in self-defence, that he had struck the fatal blow with the shovel he had in his hand. I asked him was he really sure about the sword, and said a weapon of the sort was an uncommon thing for a man in Farrell's position to have.

"Oh, sir," said Barton, simply, "I know all about how he got the sword. He had it from Crowley, the blacksmith, at home, at Lisafahan. I saw him in Court yesterday. I suppose he is up for the assizes. He had to come last year, I know. Farrell got it from him, I am sure, for the purpose of attacking me with it, if ever I gave him the chance again. Oh, misfortune that I ever did! What will become of Norah and the children?"

Promising that, in any case, they should not be left uncared for, I left him, half reproaching myself for going to disturb him at all, as his silent grief had changed into bitter sobs and convulsive crying.

It was even now but little after eight o'clock. After a few moments of deliberation, I went first to the inspector of the police force, who was slightly known to me, and having given him a brief outline of my morning's anxieties and labours, I begged him to have the blacksmith, Crowley, looked for, and kept in sight; and also to have a search made, without delay, at old Deane's house, in the neighbouring village of Lisafahan, for the cane sword. I then hurried back to my friend Lawson's ironmongery store, found him there, and with his assistance gathered together all the eleven other jurors to an impromptu breakfast party at the Imperial Hotel. We all took an almost equal interest in the matter; but, after all, how terribly little we could do! I drew up a hasty memorial, which the twelve gentlemen present signed, and in it I mentioned the additional evidence I considered I had obtained for the prisoner's side of the story, and also dilated a little on the many extenuating circumstances that existed in Barton's case, in the way of poverty and gross provocation. The Court was to open at ten o'clock, and it may have been that our pertinacity was delaying other things; but still our business was important too, and I could not help thinking that we might have been treated with at least a little civility. Mr. Ellis, the high officer whom we addressed, however, barely glanced at

the paper we presented, and threw it aside contemptuously.

"All this, sir," said he, addressing me, and waving towards the unfortunate memorial—"all this is nothing at all to the purpose. I wish for no interference in my pursuance of the course of justice. This man has had a fair trial, and has been found guilty. Be so good as to allow the law to take its course. The murdered man may have had a cane sword given him; but that is no reason why he must necessarily have attacked the prisoner with it. It has been *proved* he did nothing of the sort."

We retired crestfallen. We could do nothing more. In the afternoon I had a visit from one of the jurors with whom I had so lately parted—a baker, named Leonard. He came to tell me that, during the morning, a woman named Ellen Henessey had been in his shop, and had held a long, gossiping discourse with one of his apprentices, who was a friend of hers. The boy had mentioned how some new evidence had been discovered about Barton's case, and told her what it was—that Crowley had confessed that he had lately given Farrell a sword, on which the woman had confirmed this fact warmly.

"'Tis true for him," she said—"he did give him a sword, and I'd know that same sword if I saw it anywheres; for my little boy used to play with it at the forge, and I had to take it back to Crowley one day, as the child brought it home wid him. And, what's more, I saw that same sword in Farrell's hand as he ran down the path of the garden the morning he was killed, God rest his soul!"

"I have been trying to get away and tell you this all the morning, sir," Mr. Leonard said.

Just then we were interrupted by a constable, who had come to show me the cane sword, of which he had obtained possession on searching old Deane's house. I sent him off at once in search of Ellen Henessey; but hours passed by, and at last the man returned, to tell me that he could find no trace of the woman, though he and two or three more had searched in all directions. His belief was that she had hidden herself, lest advantage might be taken of her unguarded words in the baker's shop, and lest she might be forced to give evidence in favour of her late unpopular neighbour, Barton. I had a legal acquaintance in the

city—a barrister, named Townsend, and to him I now went for advice as to how to act. He thought that, on the ground of this new intelligence, I might demand a second interview with Mr. Ellis. He promised to introduce me into his presence next day, he being well acquainted with him; but he warned me not to expect much good to result. By his advice, I got affidavits sworn of all the evidence I had been able to collect by all the parties in any way connected with the matter.

Armed with these, we went at nine o'clock next morning—Sunday—to the hotel where Mr. Ellis was staying. Having gone into this formidable gentleman's presence with me, my friend, Mr. Townsend, then departed, leaving me to plead my cause alone.

Mr. Ellis was, if possible, less courteous and more brusque than at our previous meeting. He looked at the affidavits, heard what I had to say, and repeated his former announcement that justice must take its course. Nothing had been brought forward of sufficient importance to authorize him in interfering to stop the law in its course. I was turning away in despair, when a sudden thought struck me.

"If I bring the man Crowley and the woman Henessey to-morrow morning, so that you could cross-examine them yourself, would it be of any avail to my cause?" I asked.

"I cannot say that I think it will avail," was the discouraging answer; "but still, if you wish to bring them, I will see them to-morrow at this hour here."

Mr. Townsend was waiting for me outside, and was not at all surprised at the result of the interview.

Sunday was, of course, but an extra busy day with me; still I found time to see my friend the constable, to ask about Ellen Henessey, and to tell him how important it was that she should be made to appear next day. She had never returned to her home at all since she left it the previous morning; but he said they had spies about, on the watch for her. I did not feel very uneasy, strange to say, about her disappearance. I felt almost certain that she would not remain two nights from home without a more sufficient cause for alarm than she could have had; and, in the end, my confidence was justified.

As I left the church after evening service, the constable met me with the news that he

had made sure of her. One of his subordinates had an acquaintance with the woman. He loitered about her house all day, carrying the cane sword about with him, hidden under his coat. When it began to grow dusk she crept home, and after a little while her acquaintance dropped in for a talk, as he had often done before. He tried to draw her out about the murder case again; but she was cautious, and would not be drawn out, until he pulled out the sword cane from under his coat, whereupon she unguardedly called out to know where he had got that from.

"That's Farrell's sword," she said.

"Not it," he said, meaning to draw her on. "How do you know what it was like?"

"I know well," she said. "There's a little man's face on the head of it, and 'twas the colour of silver, but 'tis grown copper colour now. The child had it often before he died."

She and Crowley were successfully carried off next morning to Mr. Ellis. I awaited the result of the interview, with anxiety, in another room. At last I was summoned to appear.

"Well, sir?" I inquired, anxiously.

"Nothing, sir," was the cold, curt response. "If all this evidence had been produced before the man's conviction, it might have availed. As things are, it is too late."

But I had one last card to play.

"If I can produce another disinterested eye-witness of the whole fray," I asked, "and if he, too, declares Barton only struck when he was attacked, will it avail?—a man who avoided giving evidence at the right time solely from fear of unpopularity?"

A cloud gathered on the cold, keen face before me.

"You are pertinacious, sir," he said; "but your pertinacity does you credit. You seem to forget, however, that the hour fixed for Barton's execution is twelve to-day, and that it is now nearly half-past nine. Still, if you really can produce this other witness, and if you bring him to me at the Court-house in time, I will leave the Court to examine him."

Without a word, I hurried from him, called a car, and drove to Mr. Lawson's house. It was he who had come to tell me of this new witness, just as I was leaving my house in company with the witnesses Crowley and Ellen Henessey. He was expecting me,

and jumping into the car beside me, we told the driver to drive as if for his life to the village of Patrickstown, some four miles distant.

The man we were in search of was a carpenter, who had been on his way to his work on the morning of the quarrel between Farrell and Barton. He had seen the whole affair, had been known to tell his friends that Barton's death would be heavy on the souls of him and of Ellen Henessey, as they had both kept back what they ought to have told at the trial. It seems he had really intended giving his evidence in the Court; but Farrell's relations had got wind of his intentions, and had threatened to break his skull for him if he dared speak a word.

I don't think I ever had a more exciting drive than that drive was. We fortunately found the man we wanted—Richard Welstead was his name, and he had been only, so to say, "on the tramp" at Lisafahan the day of the so-called murder there. He attempted no resistance, when we told him our business with him. Perhaps he saw it would have been useless if he had. It was more than half-past eleven when we reached the Court-house, and notified our arrival to Mr. Ellis, who rose at once from his seat, requested one of the judges to accompany him, and then came to us. Before speaking to us, however, he had the forethought to despatch a messenger in haste to the gaol, to desire that the execution should be delayed for the space of one hour. His examination of the carpenter was a severe and unmerciful one, interspersed with stinging remarks on his cowardice in not coming forward to give his evidence at the proper time. Welstead was made to describe how he had, from a little bridge close to old Deane's garden, witnessed the whole affray. He said he noticed Margaret Troy, or "some woman," looking out from a back window in the house, separated from the garden by a little field; and he had seen Ellen Henessey, with whom he was acquainted, leaning, half-dressed, out of a window in the house next to old Deane's house. Barton was working away quietly at the wall as he came up the road. Then he saw a girl come out of the house, and shortly after a shout of rage attracted his attention, and he saw Farrell run down the garden and attack Barton with a sword. The latter, he distinctly declared, never raised

the shovel until he did so to ward off the sword thrust.

I entertained great hopes that at last my efforts on Barton's behalf were about to be crowned with some success; but, to my dismay, Mr. Ellis dismissed the carpenter finally with these words—

"Get out of my sight, you coward, and carry with you a remorseful conscience, burdened with the guilt of a fellow-creature's death."

"And is there no way, even now, of saving the poor fellow's life?" I cried.

"It is too late to do anything," was the stern reply.

But the judge here interfered. The result of this was that I was authorized, in consideration of vain hopes having probably been raised in Barton's mind, to announce to him that his execution was to be delayed till the following day at noon. I confess, I was half reluctant to do this—I thought it but a questionable mercy thus to prolong his torture of mind, if there was no ultimate hope of his life being spared. Still, I went at once to the gaol.

The guard for the execution was drawn up, the grave for the victim was dug, all things were ready, as I went to the convict's cell to give him this short reprieve. He had expected better news than I could give him, and it was terrible to witness his disappointment at the downfall of his hopes.

When my friend, Mr. Lawson, learned the miserable result of all our efforts, he again gathered together all his colleagues of the late trial; and they held an indignation meeting, the result of which was that they waited in a body, that evening, on the two judges. The rest deputed a clever man named Carden as their spokesman. The conclusion of his speech came with startling earnestness.

"My lords," he said, "I have served on many juries. I have sometimes been deemed useful by the judges; my abilities, such as they are, have hitherto been at the service of my country; but I solemnly declare that if James Barton be executed, or, I will rather say boldly, if he be murdered—for his execution under the circumstances will amount to murder—if I find there can be no appeal from a false verdict, given under a mistaken apprehension of facts, I will never, as long as I live, serve again on a jury, be the consequences what they may; and I believe that when the cir-

cumstances of this case transpire, many others, who value their peace of mind, will come to a like resolution."

I know not whether or not it was in consequence of this last attempt in Barton's favour, but next day, as I was on my way towards the gaol, the pompous procession of the judges on their way to the Court overtook me, and suddenly one of the carriages came to a stop. Mr. Ellis sat in it, beside the judge who had left the Court with him the previous day. The former beckoned me to him, and said—

"From a reconsideration of the circumstances of the case I have resolved to stay the execution of James Barton for a few days, until I can communicate with the Government authorities about the matter. He is relieved from the sentence of death for one week—or rather, till the wishes of the Government authorities are made known."

Having given me this piece of intelligence—and I rejoiced much to receive it—he turned to the judge beside him, and made some inaudible remark.

A few days later I heard a ballad-seller and general news-crier going through the streets, offering for general sale the "last dying words of Honour Dillon, who has just been hanged on Gallows Hill *because* she was a Catholic;" and the "last words and confession, *as ought to be*, of James Barton, who was acquitted *because* he was a Protestant."

Poor James Barton was not really acquitted, however, although his life was spared. His sentence was commuted into transportation for life. He was permitted to take leave of his wife and children before he left the country; and I was authorized to try and get him to entertain the hope of seeing them again in the land of his exile, as we were getting together a subscription for the purpose of sending them all to Van Diemen's Land; but he heard everything that was said to him with an air of uncomprehending, dull stupidity. No doubt the long anxiety he had endured, and then the alternations of hope and fear, had blunted his sensibilities, and unhinged his mind. I feared this was the case, even before he left Ireland; but the intelligence which reached his unhappy wife, shortly after his departure, confirmed my opinion.

His health, from the commencement of the voyage, had been so delicate, and his melan-

choly state of mind so pitiable, that the doctor on board the vessel had advised that he should be left to himself, and should be given more personal liberty than was usually allowed to the convicts. Unfortunately, in a moment of delirium, as it was believed, he had taken advantage of this relaxation of discipline, and had thrown himself overboard. When his body was recovered life was quite extinct.

This news proved a death-blow to his poor wife, who had never recovered her health after the fever she had had during her husband's imprisonment. She drew her last breath, however, in her old home, old Michael Deane's, her grandfather's, house; for Dr. Baines had been as good as his word, and had sifted to the bottom the affair of the lost will.

The attorney, Dwyer, had been induced to find it, when the matter was taken up by an influential person; and thus Barton's children were, at any rate, saved from the workhouse, and from abject poverty.

MUSINGS.

I WAS standing near a river,
It wound through a pleasant land:
A beautiful shining river,
With trees upon either hand.

Sailing down through mists of shadows,
Two lily-white swans went by;
Sweet perfumes came from the meadows,
Soft sunlight illumed the sky.

One gleam, full of ruddy glory,
Fell athwart the brimming tide—
"Tis like a scene in a story,
Too fair to be true," I cried.

A breeze, with gentle insistence,
Was shedding a great tree's flowers;
It came from a wondrous distance,
To scatter laburnum showers;

Shedding them into the water,
Those garlands of molten gold,
With playful though ruthless slaughter,
As graceful as it was bold.

I gazed at this rippling river,
Which wandered out to the sea;
That sea which is beauteous ever,
Whate'er its new mood may be.

And I fell to wondering greatly,
How nature is still so fair,
How the trees grow up so stately,
And the flowers to blossom dare—

When dark-robed sorrow and sadness
Are stalking through all the earth,
Treading down fair hope and gladness,
Crushing sweet innocent mirth;

When tears are for ever falling,
And drowning the world in woe;
When Sin, with its face appalling,
Glares at us where'er we go.

But the world is full of wonders—
What matters one more or less?
Some infinite ocean sunders
Calm nature from man's distress.

And thus, with no change whatever,
As year after year goes by,
This beautiful shining river
Reflects the same lovely sky;

And the rippling waves still shimmer
'Neath the sunset's golden rays,
With a glory, no whit dimmer,
Than they had in the olden days.

A. QUARRY.

TABLE TALK.

IT is from the *Jewish World* that we learn the particulars of a very curious ceremony, called "the Burying of the Law," which lately took place in the Spanish Synagogue of Jerusalem. It happens once every eight or ten years, and is accompanied by the following circumstances. There is in the "Talmud Torah" Synagogue a subterranean cave, wherein every old leaf torn out from any holy book, every old worn-out Bible, Gemara, and phylactery, is deposited by all the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem of every Minhag. After eight or ten years, when the cave is full, these old papers and books are brought out and made up into bales. This done, the Jews begin to assemble at a given time in the afternoon. A *kosher*, or faultless, Sepher Torah, richly ornamented and jewelled, is brought by the Chacham Bashi, and carried by him, and the other rabbis in turn, at the head of the procession; he is followed by the other rabbis; next come the bales, about 70 or 80 in number, each carried by a Jew; and then the rest of the people. The procession slowly winds its way out of the Zion gate for some distance along the city wall, and then descends into the valley of Jehoshaphat, where the burial-ground is situated. Here is a very deep well, where the bales are finally thrown, amidst the singing of the joyous crowd.

AS EXPIRED AIR contains not only poisonous gas, but also effete animal matter escaping from the bodies of those present, and in quantities in proportion to the amount of carbonic acid exhaled, it follows that air

vitiated by respiration is far more deleterious than air vitiated by the same amount of carbonic acid from other sources; and as the standard of permissible impurity has been placed by high sanitary authorities at six parts of carbonic acid in 10,000 of air, it is evident that the best practical chemists should be engaged in designing and perfecting means for securing to our public schools adequate and thorough ventilation. In New York, attention has been turned to the subject of school poisoning, and the air of a number of the public schools has been analyzed, with these results:—

| School. | Experiments. | Carbonic acid. |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| Elm-street | 3 | 14·6 |
| Roosevelt-street | 2 | 19·5 |
| Thirteenth-street, near Sixth avenue | 2 | 28·1 |
| Thirteenth-street, near Se- venth avenue | 2 | 21·3 |
| Grenwich-street | 2 | 17·6 |
| Vandewater-street | 2 | 14·7 |
| Madison-street, near Jack- son | 4 | 24·2 |

An experiment made in the Roosevelt-street School shows the inefficiency of ventilating flues in the wall unprovided with means for creating an upward current. An examination of the air in one of the classrooms provided with a ventilating flue was made while one of the windows was opened, and yielded 17·2 parts of carbonic acid in 10,000. The window was then closed, and after the lapse of ten minutes another examination gave 32·2 parts of carbonic acid, or an increase of 15·6 parts. The experiment now became to the teacher and children so oppressive that it was not continued. Dr. Endemann, the maker of the experiment, says:—"If the accumulation of carbonic acid had been allowed to continue, we might have reached within one hour the abominable figure of 110." The example of the New York authorities might be followed with advantage in the schools of London; but perhaps with still more important results in English law courts and judges' lodgings, as the Lord Chief Justice announced the other day that his "brother Archibald was incapacitated for taking his seat on the bench" through the foul air of the Liverpool law courts and judges' lodgings. Liverpool is, unhappily, no exception to the general rule in these matters.

THE FACTS GIVEN in the above paragraph were published in the *Sanitarian*, a New

York journal of sanitary science, and I add the three anecdotes which follow, as a singular instance of the different way in which the best scientific journals are conducted with us and in America. The *Sanitarian* stops its gaps thus:—"Mrs. Betty Muirhead kept a boarding-school at Glasgow. A girl, on her arrival, was asked if she had had the small-pox. 'Yis, mem; I've had the small-pox, the wirls (measles), the blabs (nettle-rash), the scaw (itch), the kinkhost (whooping-cough), the fever, the branks (the mumps), and the worm (tooth-ache).'"—"My mother wants an emetic from you, sir; and she bade me say if it will not be strong enough she will send it back.'"—"Said a woman to me, for whom I was weighing two grains of calomel for a child: 'Dinna be so mean wi' it—it is for a poor fatherless bairn.'" Some time will probably elapse before our own monthly scientific reviews enliven their pages in like manner; but I think at present the New York readers have the best of it.

A CORRESPONDENT: How is it that every foreigner receives our mistakes, which are many of them, doubtless, most ludicrous, with inflexible gravity; while *we* can never resist receiving theirs with most ill-bred and indelicate laughter? Both of the following anecdotes were, I am sorry to say, so treated. In the first, an English lady was complimenting a Frenchman on his manner of specking English, which she justly said was an accomplishment extremely rare among his compatriots. "Ah, Lady Charlotte," said he, "you do not ought to say zat. I know well zat I speak it but *indecently* as yet." In the second case, a German made the following observation to a friend of his, an Englishman:—"I lofe de horse, I lofe de dog, I lofe de cat, I lofe de cow, in trute I lofe everyting dat is *beastly*."

GOLF.--The game of golf is undoubtedly peculiar to Scotland, and very probably, as we shall show, had its origin in that country. But golf clubs are obtaining their standing along with cricket clubs in many towns in England. The game can only be properly played on such parts of the sea coast as are formed of "links" (Scoticé) or downs, where the *salt grass* is short and scrubby. When the Scottish Court resided at Craigmillar Castle, about two miles south of Edinburgh, the Royal party were in the habit of visiting

the links at Portobello, at a spot known as the "chains;" but where now no vestige of link is to be seen, the sea having encroached so much as to take to itself hundreds of acres during the last two centuries. From the fact of the game being a favourite with Royalty, we may suppose it was imported into England at the Union. There is at present a Blackheath Club; and in the clubhouse, at the links of Musselburgh, there hangs an engraving representing the Blackheath golfers. "Painted by L. F. Abbot, 1790; engraved by V. Green, Mezzotinto Engraver to his Majesty and the Elector Palatine;" and "Dedicated to the Society of Golfers at Blackheath," by Lemuel Francis Abbot.

ONE OF THE most promising among our less known living poets is Dr. Thomas Gordon Hake. In his little volume, "Parables and Tales," published by Chapman and Hall, there are some really fine poems. Of the new ones, the best, we think, is that entitled "The Blind Boy"—which is equal to Wordsworth—though some readers will prefer "The Cripple," perhaps, some of the verses of which are very beautiful, and the poem altogether is artistically complete. The cripple is the son of a poor village widow.

"As a wrecked vessel on the sand,
The cripple to his mother clung;
Close to the tub he took his stand,
While she the linen washed and wrung;
And when she hung it out to dry,
The cripple still was standing by."

The description of his favourite haunt—his humble skill at playing his fife—

"His cheerful ways gave many cause
For wonder; nay, his very joy
To others' mirth would give a pause."

His simple sorrows, culminating in his mother's death, and his being sent to the workhouse, are told with true art and poetic feeling. We recommend Dr. Hake's book to lovers of poetry who have not yet read it.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C. All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned on receipt of stamps for postage; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. No unaccepted MSS. will be returned until a written application has been made for them.

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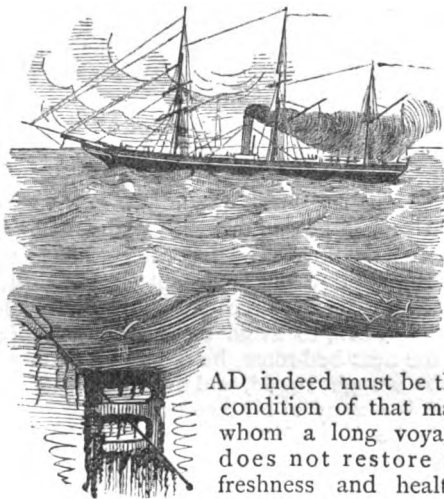
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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XLI.



AD indeed must be the condition of that man whom a long voyage does not restore to freshness and health.

Here are no letters, no duns, no newspapers. The world goes on without you. One has no longer the fidgety feeling, like the fly on the wheel, of being essential to the march of events. Nor is there any sense of responsibility. Nothing to be done, nothing to be thought of: eating and drinking the business of the day, its pleasure to watch the waves and the skies.

For Philip there was the additional pleasure of renewing intercourse with his brother man. He lost all his spectres, grew once more bright-eyed and keen-witted, and, when they steamed into the harbour of St. Denys, had altogether forgotten the wretched being who clung to the railings of the little house

at Regent's Park, and peered into the brightness within. He stepped upon the quay—the old familiar place—and looked round him. There were the coolies at work; the white houses of the residents stretching up the broad street; beyond, the ugly spire of the cathedral, like a gigantic extinguisher: and over all towered the mountains, blackening now with the shadows of evening. And then there fell upon him a very curious feeling, because he suddenly remembered that he should not know a single soul in the whole island—not one. During the whole voyage he had been nursed by a vague idea that he was rushing back into the arms of innumerable friends. Now he felt like Oliver Goldsmith when he went among the Hollanders with the grandest projects, and only remembered too late that he knew no Dutch. But his laughter was short, and he felt somewhat saddened as he ordered his things to be taken to the hotel.

There is a hotel at St. Denys—in fact, there are many, but only one of decent repute. It consists of a long, low wooden house, painted a bright yellow, with a deep verandah round it. It has two storeys, the upper one containing the bed-rooms; and for coolness' sake the partitions are not run up to the ceiling, leaving a clear space above. This not only allows the air to circulate, but also permits the guests the advantage of overhearing all the conversation that may be going on in the adjoining rooms. Lying and sitting about the verandah are a crowd of Indian boys, dressed in a sort of uniform of white trousers and black jackets, neat and handy-looking. Outside, under the thick shade of the trees, sit the happy islanders, playing dominoes. They begin this amusement at early dawn, and go on, with short intervals for business and longer ones for breakfast and dinner, till it is time to go to bed—that is, till about eight o'clock. They do this every day, including Sunday, and are never tired; and

when Azrael is sent to fetch them away, they are thinking—as they have been thinking all their lives—of the last combination of the pips. At least their lives may be called happy, because they have all that they desire.

All was as Philip remembered it years before. The waiters ran about and chattered; the players smoked cigars, drank orgeat, and chattered; and, that nothing might be wanting, a great black parrot, which had been there ten years before, was there still, stalking about with an air of being the only really superior person present. It was a parrot of infinite accomplishments; and at sight of him Philip laughed, thinking how he had made Arthur and himself laugh years before. For he had been carefully instructed in, and had by sheer force of imitative genius acquired, the art of representing all the sounds which proceed from a person affected with cold, from its earliest appearance to its most advanced stage of pulmonary consumption. Too much of him might be undesirable, but at first he was amusing. Nothing was changed. At the table d'hôte, the same dinner. The principal guests were his fellow-travellers in the mail—at all events, the most important, because they had the latest news. Of course their importance lasts only five minutes; for no one can be expected in Palmiste to pay attention to foreign news for a longer time. The concession of five minutes granted to the outer world, the conversation rolled on in its usual groove, and the latest scandal resumed its proper place. Philip noticed it all, and listened, wondering how he should get on with all these people, whom he seemed to remember in a kind of dream. It was their old manner of talk, he remembered.

He went to bed early. Just as he was turning in, he heard voices from the next room.

"Dites moi, mon ami"—it was a lady's voice—"who is this M. Durnford, who has just arrived, and dined at the table d'hôte?"

"It is not the son of our old friend," replied her husband—"not, that is, the son of your schoolfellow, Adrienne de Rosnay. Another son altogether. Some early liaison. His name is Philip. He has bought the estate of his half-brother, and comes here to see it, I suppose. It is not probable that he will live here."

"No; that is, of course, out of the question. He is a handsome young man. Pity

he is a mulatto. He had much better go back to England or France, where they are not particular as to colour."

There was a plunge and a heavy thud, as if some stout person was getting into bed, and in five minutes dead silence, but for a gentle breathing, which gradually deepened into a melodious snore.

But Philip was lying in bed, tossing about and clenching his fists. On the very first night to be reminded in this brusque and brutal way—it was too much. He lay awake. Why had he come here? What cursed fate was it which brought him back to the island he had always hated?

The night was hot, too, and the mosquitoes were stinging his face and hands. He got out of bed and lit a candle, and sat at the open window, smoking a cigar. The town was silent and asleep. Not even a dog barked. But outside, the moonlight bathed everything with a flood of rich white light. The breeze from the mountains fanned his cheek. There was the solemn silence of the night on the sleeping city. But the peace of night brought no peace to him. Why, why had he come all this way to be reminded of what he had run away from England to forget? And then he cursed his fate and himself.

All night he sat brooding and wretched. As the day broke, he fell asleep, his head on the window-sill, and slept till the noise of the Indian boys recalled him to wakefulness. Then, to avoid meeting the people of the next bed-room, he ordered a carriage to be brought round, and drove, in the early morning, away to his own estate.

As he had written to no one, he was quite unexpected. The house was uninhabited, the manager and his wife living in a cottage close by. They came and welcomed him—a bright, cheery young Frenchman, with a pretty little wife. While his own house was being set in order, would he use theirs? The manager led him over the mills, pointed out the great improvements that had been made, and then took him back to his wife, who had got a dainty breakfast, with the best claret at her command, ready for him. Then, all day there was cleaning and setting in order; and then, for a few days after, novelty and strangeness, which distracted Philip, and kept him in high spirits. Then he had to go and see his lawyer, which was a day's journey, in and out of town; then to get the lawyer to

come and stay a day or two with him. All this took time, and a fortnight passed away before Philip found it dull, or had a thought of the past.

After that, things began to be a little monotonous. For no one called upon him.

Philip fell back upon the officers. There was a regiment whose head-quarters were stationed at a place some eight miles off. It was on detachment duty, but there were always a good many officers to be found about the mess-rooms. He knew the regiment, and called upon his old friends. So, at least, companionship was attained, at the cost of perpetual dinners at Fontainebleau—which mattered little, for Philip liked hospitality. But the —th was a fast regiment, and the young fellows who went to Fontainebleau were the fastest; and the old "pace" began again, with cards, brandy and soda, and late hours.

The first event of importance, as the histories say, was a special humiliation. The estate adjoining his own belonged to a certain old French gentleman who held strong views on the subject of the mixed races. He had been a friend of Mr. Durnford père, but he abstained from calling upon his son. Now he gave, once a year, a great hunting party, lasting a week, to which all the island was invited—the Governor, the merchants, the officers, everybody who had the least claim to call himself some one. Philip was his next neighbour. But he did not invite him. Then his guests began to talk about putting up at Fontainebleau during the chasse, and it was awkward to have to say that you were not invited.

The time drew near. Philip was riding with one of his guests in the evening. They passed the house of M. de Geoffroi, who was sitting in his verandah.

"Aha!" cried Philip's companion. "Let us ride in, and call on the old boy. You'll do the talking, you know. I can't speak French."

Philip assented, and in a few moments was introduced to a white-headed old gentleman, who saluted him coldly.

"I had the honour of knowing Captain Durnford well," he said.

"I remember you well, M. de Geoffroi. You were often at Fontainebleau when I was a boy."

"I was. And your brother, M. Durnford? He is married, I hear, to Mdlle. de Villeroy."

"He is engaged, at least."

"Yes. It was once the wish of both parents that the estates should pass into the same hands."

Philip reddened.

"That, at least, cannot be, because the estate has now passed into my hands."

"So I have been informed."

Then they talked about weather, and so forth; and presently, when they went away, M. de Geoffroi offered his hand to the other, and merely bowed to Philip.

"Must have set the old man's back up, Durnford. What did you say to him?"

But Philip did not answer; being, in fact, in a temper the reverse of amiable.

The hunting party came off, and Philip sat at home with troubled heart. The party was nothing, but the *reason*—the *reason* for his exclusion from it. Then he gave a great party of his own, asking all the Englishmen, who came, and as many Frenchmen as he thought would come. It was purely out of revenge; but it seemed to affect M. de Geoffroi very little.

One more event happened to him, and then he shut himself up altogether at Fontainebleau.

There came the cold season, and the time for balls and dances. Of course, Philip got an invitation to the great ball of the year, at Government House, at which the Governor appears in uniform—a gorgeous suit, similar to that of a Lord Lieutenant; while the members of the Legislative Council wear wonderful coats, with gold lace in a sort of cushion just where the tails begin, too high up for use, except in a second-class railway carriage, where it might protect the small of the back. Then the heads, and the sub-heads, and even the tails of departments appear in wonderful and strange costumes, the effect of which at first, on the civilian of plain clothes, is simply bewildering and even appalling. Of course there are also the scarlet coats of the officers. And, on the whole, a Colonial State Ball is as pretty a sight—with the ladies all in their very finest and best—as one can generally see.

Why do we sneer at the universal desire to put on a uniform? I have never worn any, not even as a volunteer private, but I can sympathize with it. I like to see a man in all his bravery. I think there is no more admirable and edifying spectacle than that of the ordinary Briton in some strange and wonderful costume, put on about once a

year. He wears it with such a lordly air, as one who should say, "This is nothing to what I could look if I had on what I deserved." Then his wife admires him, and his daughters. And more than that, all the black-coated civilians who sneer at him envy him. The last is a very great point.

Philip, being an ex-commissioned officer, was above uniforms, it may be presumed. But he was not above admiration for the uniforms of the other sex. The women of Palmiste, pale and colourless, perhaps, are yet, above the generality of women, graces. They become their uniforms. They dance with a passion and an abandon which is unknown in colder regions. It is their one great accomplishment; and the young fellow fresh from London rooms looks on with astonishment at the lightning rapidity with which the smoothly polished floors are covered. Very soon he falls in with it, too, if he be of a sympathetic mind.

Philip, long exiled from ladies' society, enjoyed it hugely; danced everything, always with English ladies; devoured a splendid supper; took plenty of champagne. Then, as bad luck would have it, after supper one of his friends introduced him to the lady he had been dancing with, a liberty quite unpardonable by all the rules. Philip asked for the next waltz. The girl turned red, and, after a moment's hesitation, acceded, and put her arm in his. Her brother, who was standing by with frowning forehead, stepped forward at once.

"Pardon me, monsieur," he said. "My sister does not dance any more this evening."

The young lady took her brother's arm, and walked away.

The next moment he saw her whirled round in the arms of an Englishman.

All the blood rushed to his head, and he staggered with the rage which nearly stifled him. For he *knew the reason*.

He stepped across the room to where the young Frenchman was standing, and touched him on the arm.

"Will you give me a moment's conversation outside?"

The young fellow hesitated for a moment. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

"As you will," he said.

They stepped down the stairs, and into the garden. No one was there but themselves.

"May I ask the reason of your refusal to let your sister dance with me just now?"

The Frenchman hesitated. Philip repeated the question.

"Really, monsieur," said the young fellow, "it seems absurd to put such a question. Can we not leave it unanswered?"

"No. I demand an answer, and a true one. I am publicly insulted. I insist on an explanation."

"Suppose I have none to give you?"

"I *will* have one."

"You shall not have one," returned the other, quietly.

Philip lost command of himself, twisted his hand in the other's collar, and threw him heavily upon the ground.

"Will you give me one now?"

"Mulatto, I will give you none," hissed out his enemy, lying on the ground.

Philip left him there. Going back to the ball-room, he found young Freshley, of the —th.

"Come with me for a moment," he whispered.

They went outside. In the garden was the young Frenchman, trying to repair the damage done to his necktie and collar.

"There has been a row," said Philip. "You know this man, perhaps? I have knocked him down."

"I know Mr. Freshley," said the Frenchman.

"Be my friend, Freshley. I will wait for you in your quarters."

Philip went away to barracks, leaving the two together.

"What is it, D'Auray?"

"I called him a mulatto. Eh bien: it is true, at any rate. Then he put his hand to my collar, and I fell over his foot."

"Doesn't seem manners to tell a man a thing he isn't proud of, does it?"

"What business has he among ladies?"

"I didn't invite him, so I can hardly say. But you had better ask the aide-de-camp. Look here, old fellow, this is a bad business. Don't let us have a public shindy. Give me the name of a man, and I will try to make things square."

"I put myself in the hands of my cousin. You will find him in the ball-room."

Duelling has gone out of fashion in England, but it still lingers in one or two of her Majesty's colonies, where, although they have the institution of a jury, the sympathies of the jury are sure to be with the com-

batants. Here there would surely be fighting, thought Freshley, beginning to wish he had nothing to do with the business, in case of the thing ending seriously. He found the cousin, and put the case to him.

"I'm going home now to barracks. Find me there early to-morrow morning."

He went home, and discovered Philip walking up and down in a wild state of excitement.

"I will kill him, Freshley. By Heaven, I will kill him."

"You've knocked him down, anyhow. Now go to bed, old fellow—it's past two o'clock. The cousin is coming to-morrow, and we shall have an apology or a challenge. If the latter—why, then, I suppose, we must fight."

"Fight? Of course I will fight. I tell you, I mean to kill him."

"Deuced easy to pack a jury if he kills you, Philip. Don't quite see my way to packing one if you kill him."

"Bah! You don't know the country. Any lawyer will do it for you."

They went to bed, but not to sleep; and at five o'clock Freshley saw Philip outside, walking up and down, clenching his fists, in the moonlight. So, with a sigh, he got up too, and, half dressing, went out and joined him. Day broke at six, and then they had coffee and a cigar.

At half-past six the cousin was seen coming to the barracks.

"It's manners for me to receive him alone, I suppose," said Freshley. "Let's look as if we had done it fifty times before. Hang it, I feel like an Irishman out of one of Lever's novels. You go in, Phil. Well, M. D'Auray, and when do we fight?"

"I think, Mr. Freshley, that—well, you see, it's an awkward business. I hardly see my way to a fight."

"Oh, very well. For my own part, I'm very glad. My man is insulted. That you will acknowledge. Your man is knocked down. That there is no getting over, is there? So you won't fight! I'm sure I'm not displeased; because, after all, yours is the most injured side, I should say. Matter of taste—never been knocked down myself. Why can't we fight?"

"Well, your principal—I am not in the least wishing to insult or offend you."

"You forget that Mr. Durnford has had the honour of bearing her Majesty's commission."

"Not at all. That was considered. I laid the case before several of my friends. We all agreed that if he were still an officer in the British army, to refuse a duel would be to insult the English flag. But he is no longer an officer, and we cannot fight him."

Freshley whistled.

"Oh, very good, I'm sure. The knocking down is on your side, as I remarked before. Have a pick-me-up this fine morning, M. D'Auray—a brandy and soda?"

"Nothing, thank you. I have the honour to wish you a good morning."

"Good morning, M. D'Auray. Perhaps your cousin would like a pick-me-up."

But M. D'Auray did not appreciate the joke, being unacquainted with the niceties of the English language.

"Now, that's devilish smart and good," said the lieutenant, left alone. "Phil, my boy, come out. They won't fight."

"Why not?"

"Don't know. Can't say. Wasn't told. Funk, I expect. I say, Phil, I asked him if his cousin wanted a pick-me-up this morning. Devilish good remark, eh? I don't know when I said anything sharper. He'll find out what I meant by and by. Look it up in the dictionary, I suspect. Well, old boy, I'm glad we're out of it. I didn't like it at the first. And, between ourselves, I couldn't afford to lose my commission just now. Pretty fools we should look, the brace of us, in a dock, with the beak pounding away at us, saying it was the worst case he had ever known in the whole course of his professional career—eh? And then, perhaps, chokee for six months, and a court-martial afterwards. Upon my word, I'm delighted. And now I think I shall have another nap."

But that was Philip's last appearance in public. Henceforth his days are few and troubled, and they are spent wholly on his own estate at Fontainebleau.

CHAPTER XLII.

MEANWHILE, in the quiet house at Regent's Park, the two women waited—some women seem to have nothing to do except to wait. No change came to them. All they knew—and this through Arthur's lawyer—was that Philip had arrived in Palmiste, and was residing on the estate. Nothing more. As for Laura, her suffering was over.

Only she was subdued. Time, and the

atmosphere of love with which they surrounded her, had cured her.

"You love him still, child, do you not?" asked Marie.

"I will tell you, as truthfully as I can, everything," said Lollie. "You cannot tell—it is impossible for any one to know—how ignorant and foolish I was a year ago. When Mr. Venn said he should like to see me married to a gentleman, I understood nothing—nothing of what he meant. Then I met Philip, and he asked me to marry him. Mamma, I declare that I accepted him only to please Mr. Venn—for no other reason whatever. Then he said I was cold, and wanted me to say I loved him. Of course, I could not say so, because I did not, then. Afterwards, we were married, and we went abroad; and he was kind. I think I began to love him then. But now I always think of the last time I saw him, when he asked my forgiveness, and looked sorry. And since then I have loved him better than ever before. Poor Philip! Perhaps if I had been fitted for him he would have been a better man."

"I think of him always, my daughter," said Philip's mother. "I lie awake and think of him. They took him away from me when he was only one year old. I have seen him, since then, only twice in my life. Once he refused to own me, and once he refused to speak to me. But what woman can forget the little hands that curl round her neck—of her own child? Philip is my son, Lollie. And a mother's love is better than a wife's."

"I wish I loved him more, mamma, for your sake," said Lollie, caressing her.

"Nay, dear. You are the sweetest and best of daughters. My life, now its great hope has failed, would be sad indeed, and lonely, if it were not for you. And we must pray, dear, more and more, for his return to us. I know that he will one day lay his head in my arms, and kiss me himself. Don't ask me how I know it. I am certain. Only I cannot see all the future, and there seems a cloud which I cannot pierce. Somehow, you are not with me, child."

She often talked like this, pouring out what still haunted her of the old negro superstitions.

"I know where he is now, at this moment," she murmured, half closing her eyes. "It is morning with us, but afternoon with him. He is riding alone along the road.

The canes are waving each side of him. His face is clouded and angry. He is not thinking of us, Lollie. Alas—alas! he only thinks of himself. The time is not yet come."

Lollie grasped her hand, and cried out. Marie started, and looked round her.

"Kiss me, my daughter. I was far away in Palmiste with my son, our Philip."

Their only visitors were Hartley Venn and his sister, Arthur and Madeleine; and they went nowhere, except sometimes to the opera, which was a necessary luxury to the singer.

"You have changed Lollie altogether, madame," said Hartley, looking at his little girl.

"How am I changed, Mr. Venn?" asked Laura.

"That is what I am trying to find out. You look thinner than you were; but it is not that. You are no taller; so it is not that. I give it up, Lollie."

Marie could have told him. The girl had been, for the first time in her life, living among ladies, and was now a lady herself—such as all the arts of Hartley Venn could not fashion or produce.

"It is only you, Mr. Venn," said Madeleine, "who never change. Oh, that I could tie ropes round you, and drag you away from your chambers, and make you work."

"He does work, Madeleine. He really works very hard," said Lollie.

"Part of your wish has been already anticipated, Miss de Villeroy; for I have met with a grave misfortune."

"What is it?" they cried.

"I have received notice to quit my chambers at the end of the year."

"Oh!" cried Lollie, "the dear old chambers."

"I shall not have the heart to find out new chambers, and so I shall go and live in lodgings. It is sad, after so many years of occupation. I had hoped that my life would be finished there."

"Indeed," said Madeleine, "I think it a very good thing. You men get into a habit of doing nothing, going nowhere, and living three or four in a set, which seems to me destructive of everything. Go into the world and work, Mr. Venn."

"Really, Miss de Villeroy, you carry about so deep an air of resolution and activity that you shame us all. I *will*

go into the world and work. What shall I do?"

This was easier to ask than to answer. Besides, Madeleine was at this time intently occupied in considering Arthur's future. He, too, professed a willingness to go into the world and work. But what work? Here was a tall, strong man to be thrown on her hands for life, and what was she to find for him? Arthur said he would work, but he never made the least effort to find work, and went on burying himself in his books, while Madeleine fretted about his useless life.

"Marry me at once, Madeleine," he said, "and I will be your secretary. Will that do?"

"I don't want a secretary," she said.

But she consented to marry him at once, which was all he wanted.

This was in February. The wedding was quiet enough, for they were a comparatively friendless pair. Mrs. Longworthy was there; and in the church, as spectators, Marie and Laura. Madeleine invited them to the breakfast; but this was against Marie's rules, and Laura would not go without her.

When they came back, after a month in Paris, the old life went on just as before. Mrs. Longworthy lived on with them, being one of those old ladies whom it is pleasant to have in the house. Arthur had his study, where Madeleine repaired sometimes in the evening, for those little talks and confidential whisperings which even the most queenly of women are not above liking. But all became as it was before, and the house at Regent's Park was still a favourite place to spend an evening.

"I like it, Arthur," said Madeleine. "It is all so different from what you get anywhere else. I like Madame de Guyon, poor woman, and the noble way she bears her misfortunes. I like Lollie, with her innocent dependence upon Mr. Venn. And I like that lazy, good-for-nothing Bohemian, who is everybody's friend except his own. They are quaint, delightful people. I suppose the world would object, if the world knew all. But then the world knows nothing. And as for poor little Lollie, our sister-in-law, no one could possibly blame her."

"Surely not. If ever there was an act—"

"No, Arthur. Do not put yourself into a rage about what has been done, and cannot be helped. After all, it was mostly Mr.

Venn's fault. Did ever man devise a more absurd training for a girl?"

Came again the spring, and with it the little excursions that Venn was so fond of. But they were not quite the same. The relations between himself and Lollie were altered somehow. He could no longer kiss her in the old paternal way. Sometimes, as he thought of her, he ground his teeth, and cursed. But ever, with her, his voice was soft and kind. He was always thoughtful and anxious about her. She was still, as before all this, his little girl.

Marie grew to love him as if he had been her own son; scolded him for his laziness almost as soundly as Madeleine; went to his chambers, and brought away great stores of linen, which she and Lollie amused themselves by setting in order for him; made him read her some of his numerous Opuscula, and criticized them in a way which astonished him; and gave him hints and suggestions which opened out vistas of innumerable other literary efforts, so that he formed as many projects as Coleridge.

The spring grew into summer. And then a change was to happen. For one morning the Palmiste mail came in, and Arthur received a letter from his lawyer.

"Your half-brother," he said, "is going on, I fear, as badly as possible. It is my duty—or, rather, I make it my officious duty—to tell you that his only companions are the most dissipated young Englishmen of the colony—officers chiefly. At Fontainebleau there are reported to be nightly scenes of drink and play, which will most certainly end in disaster, if not to fortune, then to health. In this climate, as you know, one has to exercise some discretion. Poor Philip has none. I liked him at first. He landed here fresh and bright, as if he had never touched a bottle of brandy. But that is four months ago, and his face is now bloated with drink and late hours. If you have any influence over him, write and expostulate. If you, or any friend, could only come out here, all might be well. Philip is open to any influence. He can resist no temptation. He is led away by every voice that he hears. But he is kind-hearted. In an evil hour he insulted little Volet, his manager, whom you remember as a boy. No better or more honest man ever lived. Volet was obliged to resign. Since he went away, Philip has been secretly sending him

money to keep him going—I suppose, out of a desire to make atonement. But the estate is going to the dogs. In a few months the hot season will be upon us again, when these excesses will tell more than they do now. I may say that he always speaks of you in terms of the highest respect. He told me, what I did not know before, that the estate is only his own because you refused to fight the case. I think that you might, at least, write to him.”

And so on, all in the same strain.

Arthur showed the letter to his wife.

“What shall we do?”

“You must write to him. Say nothing of the past, except what is kind. I will write, too. You will remember that he did once do what I asked him.”

“I know—that was because he loved you.”

“He did not really love me. He fancied he did. The only woman he ever really loved was Lollie. I am sure of it, from the way he spoke of her, the bitterness with which he remembered the poor girl’s look when he cast her off.”

“How can you be bitter against a woman you have ever loved?”

“I knew you would say that. It is just what a man would be sure to say. The bitterness, great stupid, was in his own breast; and he thought he felt bitter towards her. Suppose you are bilious. It is not a romantic comparison, but it will do. You see everything yellow. That is how Philip saw things. His real nature was turned inside out. I told you, months ago, that his mind was like your old garden, all overrun with pumpkins.

“What a silly, unreasonable creature he is! Why does he hide his head in a bush, like an ostrich? He is ashamed of his mother—he knows, my dear Arthur, that all the stupid story of the marriage is a forgery. I saw the look he gave her in the church. There was longing and repentance in it, as well as shame. He is stupidly ashamed that his mother is a great singer, as well as that she is coloured. And what a woman is he ashamed of! Is there one woman in all the world more charitable, more large-hearted, less selfish than poor Marie? Ashamed of her? He ought to be proud of her, and to thank God who gave him such a mother.”

Arthur moved his hand.

“And, oh, Arthur, he is more, ten thousand times more ashamed of himself and his treatment of Laura. I believe that is the secret of all his sins. He wanted at first to make money by gambling, for her. But gambling is a hard master to serve. And then—and then—oh! my poor Phil, what a melancholy ending it all is!”

“It is not ended yet.”

She shook her head.

“You do not know,” she said, “but I know; because he sent me a letter before he went away, and his landlady brought it. He used to wander about at night, to drink all day. He saw no one. He used to lie on the sofa, with his head in his hands, and groan. He used to see things that do not exist in the daytime. He knew he was dishonoured, poor fellow; and he tried, like a weak creature as he is, to drown it all in drink.”

“I blame myself, Madeleine. I should have gone to him, in the old way, and said what I could to help him. Poor Phil is good at heart.”

“Good at heart! What is the good of that? Everybody is good at heart. I want men to be strong of will. Women only love strong men.”

“Then why do you love me, Madeleine?”

“I don’t know, Arthur,” she said, smiling.

“You know that I love you, dear—do you not?—with all the strength of my nature. But then you are strong in all good things. I believe in your nobleness, dear. God knows, if man and wife cease to believe in that, there can be nothing left. . . . Let us go and see madame.”

They got there in time for luncheon. Venn was lying lazily on the sofa. He did not get up as they came in, but held out his hand, smiling.

“You come like a breath of the most invigorating breeze, Mrs. Durnford. Do not reproach me. I am hard at work, trying to make out, with Lollie here, what it is I am to work at.”

“I tell him he ought to practise at the Bar,” said Lollie.

“So I would, but for two things. I know no solicitors, and I know no law. Bless you, if I had a brief I should be obliged to put it into a drawer for a couple of years while I read law. No. Think of something else.”

“What do rich men do?” asked Marie.

“They seem always at work.”

“They become Directors. Then they

make speeches. They take chairs. They do all sorts of things for nothing, which poor men get paid for. They even write for the magazines, confound them!"

"Write a novel," said Madeleine.

"Eh?" cried Venn, starting up. "Now, that is a practical suggestion. Lollie, do you remember the novel we wrote together, and buried close above Teddington Lock? That was real work, if you like. Oh, if we had not buried that novel!"

"Let us go and fish for it," cried Lollie, laughing.

"We will. We will go at once. Mrs. Durnford, you will come too. We will go this afternoon. The sun shines. The blue-bottle buzzes. The lilac is in blossom. The lark will be singing. The laburnum is golden. Lollipops, put on your hat—your summer hat, with the brightest feather in it. We will have a glorious day."

Madeleine made a sign to Marie.

"You three go," she said. "Madeleine will stay with me, and you shall have a late dinner at nine. Go away, all of you, and leave us two to make ourselves miserable together."

"What is it, dear?" she asked.

For all answer, Madeleine gave her the lawyer's letter.

Marie read it, and the tears came into her eyes.

"What are we to do?" asked Madeleine.

"I knew it was coming. I have had presentiments. I have had dreams. I dreamed that I saw my brother Adolphe—poor Adolphe, I wonder if he is living yet—putting a gri-gri under Philip's head. That is to produce disaster, you know. Every night my thoughts carry me back to Fontainebleau. George Durnford speaks to me in visions. And every night I see Philip's face averted. My dear, since I saw him, I have felt myself en rapport with him. You may laugh as you will; but as he suffers, I suffer. When he is wretched, lonely, repentant—I am sad. I hide it from that poor child, who does not know what such love means, and thinks she loves Philip because she pities him. And as I look forward, I see nothing but clouds and blackness. A great disaster is before me—that is, before Philip. Day by day, the yearning has become stronger in me to go out and try to save my boy. If I go, I may find him in the midst of his com-

panions, drunken and dissolute. He may drive me away with hard words. He may—But he will not, he will not, Madeleine. I feel that the hour for reconciliation is drawing near. I shall see my boy. I shall feel his cheek to mine. I shall be able to put my arms round his neck, and kiss him. Oh, child, child! if ever God gives you a son, pray—pray—pray that you may not suffer what I am suffering now."

She was silent for awhile, struggling with her emotion.

"Do you think that God is punishing me? I cannot think that. I have learned long since my sin, and been forgiven. Of that I am as sure as if a voice from Heaven had pronounced my pardon. I know it from my own heart. My Father has forgiven the sin of an ignorant childhood. It cannot be that. Then what is it?—what is it? I lived but for him. All those years when I toiled in Italy, trying to improve the defects of my education, all those years when I sang upon the stage—it was all for Philip. I lived upon nothing—my money all went into the bank for him. I waited for the day when I could say to him—'Son, son, take all I have, and be happy. Only kiss your mother—if only it be once, and to let her go away.' I never thought to be to him what most mothers are to their children. I prayed only for a kind thought, a kind word. I got none. And now, what are all my riches worth? I have no son." *

"You have Laura. You love her."

"Yes—I am wicked. I forget, in my selfish passion. I love this child, who loves me. There is no better girl in the world than my daughter. But, Madeleine, I want my own child—my very own: the baby that lay in my lap—my own life's blood—my darling, my gallant son! Do not tell me that he has fallen from his ideal. He suffers, and would rise again, if he could. Let me go to him. Let me try once more to gain his love, all alone, by the verge of that great forest where I wandered one night all alone, and saw visions of the future. Did I ever tell you? I went out, with the first money I ever earned at singing, by myself. I crept at night through the woods. I found George Durnford weeping for his dead wife—not me, dear Madeleine. I was bitter and cruel. Then I saw poor Adrienne, white, pale, and imploring, before me, and I was softened. I saw the children. Arthur clung to me and kissed me, in his pretty way. My own boy,

my Phil, turned his face away and cried. It was an omen, and my heart fell. I left George Durnford, and went back as I had come, through the forest. All the night, as I walked along in the black darkness, I heard voices saying to me that there should be no happiness for me—nothing but bitterness, disappointment, and misery.”

“But you have found happiness, dear Madame de Guyon.”

“Yes, yes; but not the happiness I wanted. There is nothing that I desire but the love of my son—nothing but to hear him say that he is sorry for the words he spoke.”

“Play to me, dear. Soothe me with music, for my spirit is troubled.”

Madeleine played, while Marie walked up and down, with fingers interlaced, trying to recover from her agitation.

Presently she sat down, close to the piano.

“Don’t leave off, my dear. It soothes me as nothing else can. I am determined what to do. I will go out by the next mail. That starts in a few days, and I shall pack to-morrow—take my ticket and go.”

As she spoke, a wailing was heard from the next house in the street, of a child. She shrank back, with a white face.

“That is the worst sign you can hear.”

“Do not be superstitious,” said Madeleine. “If you had heard the child cry at any other time, you would have laughed.”

“At any other time—yes. That I *am* superstitious is true, my dear. I can never shake it off. Call it what you please, weakness, prejudice. I was made superstitious when I was a child, and the old fears cling to me like—like the colour of my birth.”

They spent the day making preparations. There were not many wanted, for Marie was a woman whom stage experience had taught to be profuse in dress.

“Lollie will go and live with Miss Venn,” she said. “Yes, dear, I know what you were going to offer, and it is very kind of you; but it is better for the present that she should not go into society. I do not want her to feel things.”

“She would not feel anything. She is quite convinced that she was properly married at first.”

“It is not only that. People might ask who Mr. Philip Durnford was, and—and—oh! Madeleine, do you not see that I am right?”

“You are always right, dear madame.”

In the evening the party came back—

Venn, at least, happy. They had been fishing for the novel, and failed to find it. Lollie had caught a gudgeon, Arthur had caught nothing. And so on, childishly happy, as they always were when Venn was with them—the man who never lost his delight in childish things.

And so, after their late dinner, Venn thought it was time to go.

“Stay a moment, dear Mr. Venn,” said Marie. “I have something to say. Will Miss Venn take our child for a little while?”

“Mamma!” cried Lollie.

“Yes, dear. We have had a letter from Palmiste. I am going out.”

Laura turned white.

“And I so happy to-day! It is wicked. Is he ill? Tell me.”

“We will tell you everything, dear,” said Madeleine. “Philip is not well, and the news is not good.”

Laura gave a great gasp.

“And I shall go too—shall I not, Mr. Venn? Who ought to be with a man who is ill but his wife?”

They looked at each other, and were silent.

Venn spoke first.

“Lollie, dear, let me talk to you alone for a moment.”

He took her into another room.

“Would you like to go, my dear?” he said, folding her in his arms in the old fashion, while her head leant upon his shoulder. “Would you like to go? Remember all. He has treated you cruelly—”

“But he asked my forgiveness.”

“And he said himself that you had better be away from him for a while. My dear, your husband is not a good man. He has done bad things. When he comes back, with his mother, and asks to be taken into your arms again, I shall not be one to refuse him forgiveness. But he does not ask for you, or his mother either. If humiliation is to fall on the one who goes out to him, do not let it be you.”

“He will think I have forgotten him. As if I ever could forget him,” she pleaded.

“Do you love him, Lollie?”

“Always the same question. I love him as I always did, no more and no less. But he is my husband.”

Venn choked a spasm of intense jealousy.

“Love him still, dear. Love your hus-

band. But you must not go to him. Will you be guided by me?"

"I am always guided by you. Whoever else have I in the world?" she said, simply. "As if I did not love you better than all the world."

"My dear little girl," he whispered, because his voice choked—"ever my dear little girl, are you not? Nothing can part us. Nothing shall sever the love we have for each other. But you will stay with Sukey, while madame goes out and tries to recover her son for all of us."

He went back to the others, leaving Lollie there.

Then they arranged things; and next day he went to see Sukey, telling her only that Madame de Guyon had business in Palmiste, her native place. For there was sad deceit and hiding of the truth necessary, and only the little circle themselves knew all the history that bound them together with ties so sacred and so sad.

The day she went away, Marie sought Hartley Venn alone.

"I know," she said, "that evil will come to me. I feel it like the cold wind before the rain. But good will come, too. See, now, dear Mr. Venn, there is but one thing I have to say. You will find at my lawyer's, in case—in case I never come back—my will. To whom should I leave my money but to my Philip's wife?"

SOME INFECTIOUS EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTION.

THE sympathy of souls is a doctrine which has found great favour with fanciful philosophers. The poets, too, have skimmed over its surface like twittering swallows over a lake, just dipping their wings now and then—a way poets have of dealing with most philosophical subjects, by the bye. Not to go too far afield in search of quotations, here is one from the Laureate himself, which will serve as an illustration:—

"Star to star vibrates light; may soul to soul
Strike through a finer element of her own?
So from afar, touch as at once?"

Souls, however, are what the Scotch would call "kittle cattle" to deal with; and we have no wish to trench upon the domain either of philosophers or poets. Our business is with bodies, and with that corporeal sym-

pathy which unquestionably exists among human beings, the incorporeal counterpart of which fancy would fain look for among souls. It is our object in the present paper to consider some objectionable forms in which that sympathy shows itself—not from a philosophical or scientific, but from a practical point of view. In short, we would give a practical statement of a practical grievance, from which, probably, many hundreds of intelligent persons suffer in common with ourselves; for modest, almost painfully modest, as we are, we nevertheless do claim to belong to the ranks of the intelligent.

The diagnosis of the expression of the emotions in men and animals has occupied the attention of many philosophical writers besides Mr. Darwin; but on looking through their works we have found little, if any, information or even comment upon what seems to us an extremely interesting branch of the subject—viz., the causes and results of infectiousness in certain expressions of emotion. It is, no doubt, generally true that sympathy and imitation are the immediate promoters of infection; but the problem we should like philosophers to solve for us is, why certain expressions of emotion carry with them a stronger appeal to our sympathy and imitation than others. It is admitted by all writers on this subject that while, as a general rule, the power of interpreting emotional expression and the power of moving our organs as we see others do are *acquired*, there are, nevertheless, some manifestations of feeling which do *instinctively* excite the same kind of emotion in others. In these cases we are unable to resist a disposition to fall in with the particular emotions and actions manifested, especially if it should happen that our minds are at leisure, and unabsorbed by any active mental exercise.

Now, there are three outward expressions of emotion which are peculiarly infectious, and, moreover, often inconveniently and disagreeably infectious, affording a striking illustration of the awkward and unpleasant effects of exuberant and ill-regulated sympathy—they are the laugh, the yawn, and the cough.

Laughter, as few will need to be told, is not an expression peculiar to any feeling; it is not always even a pleasurable or voluntary emotion, as witness the sardonic laugh, the hysterical laugh, and the laughter produced by tickling, and some other sensations allied

to acute pain. Any intense feeling may produce involuntary laughter. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in an essay on the "Physiology of Laughter," describes himself as laughing over the solution of puzzling mathematical problems; though, for our own part, we confess we have found them anything but a laughing matter. In these cases laughter is an involuntary expression of emotion, capable neither of being produced nor controlled by any exercise of the will.

That infectious laughter, too, the result of sympathy and imitation, which we are now considering, is also involuntary in its origin, though not incapable of control by an effort of will. It was our misfortune, the other day, to be the victims—the very unwilling victims—of this infectious laughter. We were "assisting" at an amateur entertainment of readings and music, and a gentleman who had already acquitted himself creditably, and who had strong claims upon the audience in regard to his having come at considerable inconvenience to contribute his quota to the evening's entertainment, commenced to read Tennyson's "Lady Clara Vere de Vere." Something in the repetition of the name, or in the reader's voice or manner, tickled some hysterical creature in the back benches. There was a giggle, then a titter. At each repetition of the heroine's name it grew louder. The infection spread till it reached the front benches; and, do what they would, the soberest could not keep their countenances, though, for the life of them, they could not have said what they were laughing at. We found ourselves divided between two sympathies—sympathy with the mortified and disconcerted reader, and sympathy with the ludicrous idea which had produced the first titter. The latter was too strong for us, and produced the outward expression even against our will. Who was to blame? The original titterer? Well, you could hardly blame a person for laughing under the operation of tickling; and Mr. Darwin tells us that the tickling of the mind is analogous to the tickling of the body, and that in both cases laughter is the involuntary result.

There is unquestionably something very plausible in that excuse. And, no doubt, when consciousness is suddenly and unawares transferred from great things to small—from the gravest matters to the lightest—the sense of incongruity is so strong, and the effect so ludicrous, that laughter is

almost irrepressible. And it is when the nerves have been subjected to the severest tension that we are most liable to infection from such laughter. Elderly fogies, who are so irate with young people sometimes for what they call "frivolous laughter" and "silly giggling" at inopportune seasons, and who are ready to visit such outbursts as heinous crimes against decorum, would do well to remember that it is often as impossible to refrain from laughing when the mind is tickled as when the body is tickled, and the mind is most liable to be tickled by the ludicrous and incongruous when it is most seriously occupied. Still, this infectious laughter is very humiliating, because it is generally meaningless. It is humbling to feel that we may be at the mercy of some irrepressible giggler, and be liable at any moment to have our gravity upset at an awkward crisis. Mr. Darwin says that Dr. Crichton Browne informed him that with idiots laughter is the most prevalent and frequent of all emotional expressions. And, as an instance of the senseless nature of this laughter, he mentions the case of a boy roaring with laughter because another boy had given him a black eye. Surely, we must all of us be sometimes very near the borders of idiotcy, for it is the most senseless laughter which is most infectious. There must be times when our minds are vacant—when reason has temporarily retired from her throne; and then, like idiots, we are liable to catch this infection of meaningless laughter.

But are there no means of checking this unhappy susceptibility of infection—this painful fecundity of sympathy? There is a paper of Addison's in the "Spectator," which throws out a suggestion to the point. He is describing a whistling match which he witnessed at Bath. "The prize was a guinea, to be conferred upon him who should whistle clearest, and go through his tune without laughing, to which at the same time he was provoked by the antick postures of a Merry Andrew, who was to stand upon the stage and play his tricks in the eye of the performer." And the paper concludes with a suggestion that such matches should be encouraged—among other reasons, "because it promotes gravity, and teaches ordinary people to keep their countenances if they see anything ridiculous in their betters." The plan is worth trying. Perhaps; when the scientific theory of the ex-

pressions of emotion is better understood among us, the control of those expressions will be recognized as an important branch of education. A mountebank or buffoon will be an important functionary in every educational establishment; not to create laughter, but to make his pupils constantly familiar with all that is most grotesque and ludicrous, that they may be able to keep their countenances under the most trying circumstances. What a happy mode of utilizing that mobility of feature and power of contortion now wasted upon the hackneyed "business" of burlesque!

Of yawning, it is not necessary to say much. This expression of emotion, too, results from a morbidly sympathetic frame of mind. If there be the slightest latent atom of drowsiness in us, even though unfelt before, the sight of a yawn at once develops it, and by an instantaneous process the chain of association is completed; and before we have time to realize the thought of drowsiness, it has passed into action in the yawn. Apropos of yawning, it seems hardly fair that the baboon should be able to adapt the yawn to two expressions of emotion, whilst man has only power to make it the channel for expressing one emotion. Baboons, according to Mr. Bartlett, express anger by a yawn, and avail themselves of this expression to show an adversary their formidable array of teeth, ready for action. It is to be hoped that this form of the yawn is not so infectious as the other, or else baboons must lead an unpleasantly quarrelsome life.

So infectious is the yawn, that even the artificial semblance produces a sympathetic effect. We once detected a friend of our own yawning while looking at that scene in Hogarth's "*Marriage à la Mode*," in which the Earl is represented yawning over his matutinal coffee in the Countess's boudoir. Though, for the matter of that, we twice distinctly detected ourselves unconsciously smiling while looking at the photographs of two laughing little girls in Mr. Darwin's last book—a high compliment to the fidelity to nature in each case. In the same paper of the "*Spectator*" from which we have already quoted, there is the following curious description of a yawning match:—"After you have despatched these two important points of grinning and whistling, I hope you will oblige the world with some reflections upon yawning, as I have seen it practised on a

Twelfth Night, among other Christmas gambols, at the house of a very worthy gentleman who always entertains his tenants at that time of the year. They yawn for a Cheshire cheese, and begin about midnight, when the whole company is disposed to be drowsy. He that yawns widest, and at the same time so naturally as to produce the most yawns among the spectators, carries home the cheese." We think our readers will agree with us that we suffer quite enough inconvenience from the natural propensity to yawn at the sight of every gaping mouth, without cultivating the practice as an amusement.

And now we come to the last of our infectious expressions of emotions—the cough: the most annoying and irritating of them all. The cough is an expression common to several emotions. For example, there is the cough of incredulity, the cough of warning, the cough of hesitation, the cough of irony, the cough of recognition, and lastly, there is the cough of sympathy, with which alone we purpose dealing here. It is this sympathetic cough which is the source of distraction and irritation to all who visit public meetings, and especially to those who attend large gatherings to listen to pulpit or platform eloquence. So irate has the prevalence of the sympathetic cough sometimes made us, that only a strong regard for decorum, and a deep sense of the solemnity of the occasion, has kept us from shouting aloud our indignation; and we doubt not that every intelligent listener has experienced similar feelings.

There would seem to be a large number of human beings of the gushing order, whose object in life is to wander about seeking for sympathy at all times and in all places—there is a craving for fellowship of feeling which gnaws at their hearts, and is apparently never satisfied. There are, for example, those hypochondriacal humbugs who live upon the reputation of a "shattered nervous system," who will hold forth upon their ailments by the hour to any one who will listen, in the hope of eliciting sympathy; and who are never more in their element than when they can get hold of another invalid, compare experiences, and, if possible, prove themselves the more hopelessly irrecoverable of the two. They cherish their diseases as if they were most precious gifts, and delight to think that they are looked upon as interesting because real or

imaginary ailments give them a distinct individuality.

To the same class as these valetudinarian nuisances belong the sympathetic coughers. They, too, are seekers for sympathy. Let us, for instance, imagine for a moment one of them entering a church, where a large congregation has assembled to listen to some powerful preacher. No matter how interesting the sermon, the seeker for sympathy soon grows restless, he must have what he came for; the thought uppermost in his mind is, "I wonder if there is any sympathetic soul present—I'll try." A cough is put out as a feeler; instantly there is an answer—one, two, three, a dozen sympathizers respond to the appeal. This is intensely gratifying to the seeker for sympathy; but, of course, he cannot long remain content with one response. He tries again and again, and each time he is answered back from the throats of a score or two of sympathizers, who manage thus to keep up a well-sustained conversation of sympathetic coughs. Thus, the presence of a single one of these seekers for sympathy is enough to distract a whole congregation, and drive every intelligent listener distracted. It is needless, of course, to say that the sympathetic cougher is not an intelligent listener, he only cares to gratify his craving for sympathy; and the worst of it is, that unless we are on the alert the most attentive of us is liable to be a victim to the infection of this sympathetic cough. A cough may unawares remind us that we have been ourselves suffering from huskiness of late; and, though we may feel no symptoms at the moment, an irresistible desire to test the clearness of our bronchial tubes may come over us, and worry us into giving vent to a cough. "The sound of clearing the throat," says Mr. Bain, in his work on the "Emotions and the Will," "reminds us so forcibly of the action, or brings the idea of it so vividly before the mind, that it is difficult to resist passing to the full reality." We have a right, therefore, to be indignant with these sympathetic coughers for exposing us to the risk of infection.

Sympathy is no doubt very pleasant and desirable in its proper place; but it is a plant which needs cutting and pruning. When it is allowed to straggle about at its own free will, fixing its tendrils here and there and everywhere, it becomes emphatically a nuisance. And that gushing, exuberant, irrepressible sympathy which gives these expressions of

emotion their disagreeably infectious character, is a thin, watery sentiment for which no one is any the better.

Those are very pretty and graceful lines of the poet Rogers, in which he describes sympathy:—

"The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
Till waked and kindled by the master's spell;
And feeling hearts, touch them but rightly, pour
A thousand melodies unheard before."

But we feel sure the poet would agree with us that the principle is not of universal application, and that the "thousand melodies" of "feeling hearts" are anything but harmonious when they take the form of the irritating cough. We would rather commend to the attention of all seekers after sympathy the sentiment embodied in the song, "When sorrow sleepeth wake it not;" for we assure them it is equally applicable to sympathy as to sorrow.

It is notorious that *intelligent* persons, even when suffering from those throat and chest complaints which naturally produce coughing, can sit through a long speech or sermon without once letting a cough escape them, simply by an effort of the will. We leave readers of ONCE A WEEK—who are, ipso facto, all persons of the highest intelligence—to draw from that statement its logical deduction.

Now, can society devise no plan to protect itself from these infectious persons? Can there be no prohibitory enactment passed analogous to that by which persons afflicted with the small-pox, or measles, or scarlatina are tabooed? We fear not. But we think that all public speakers and preachers would be doing a good service if they now and then pointedly alluded to the subject, and drew the attention of these unhappily afflicted persons to the fact that they are a source of very great annoyance and unpleasantness to their neighbours—a fact of which they seem totally unconscious. Society itself, too, by extending its code of etiquette, might do something to abate the nuisance; for surely it might be impressed upon these unfortunates that the good taste and the good manners which lead us to suppress a horse laugh or a yawn, in a drawing-room or at a dinner table, should prompt even those who are too thoughtless and unintelligent to be moved by other considerations to keep these infectious expressions of emotion in subordination when they are in public. In conclusion, we commend to all

such gigglers, coughers, and yawners these words of Sir Charles Bell:—"As we hold our breath and throw ourselves into an opposite action to restrain the ludicrous idea which would cause us to break out in rude laughter, so may we moderate other rising impulses by checking the expression of them; and by composing the body, we put a rein upon our very thoughts."

DOCTOR MIDDLETON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A DESPERATE CHARACTER."

CHAPTER I.

LET me premise that I am an Australian, and may, consequently, be more or less disposed to look with an unconsciously prejudiced eye upon things European in general, but especially upon things Irish; for it was in Ireland that I spent the greater portion of the first weary days of my exile, and it is in Ireland that the scene of this history is laid.

Four years had elapsed since I had looked my last upon my native land—four years, during which I had seen neither opossum nor kangaroo; four years, during which I had gazed upon white swans and leafless trees, and had felt what it was to be a stranger on a foreign shore.

I had left my home for the purpose of studying an honourable profession, for the mastering of which sufficient opportunities were not then afforded in my own country. I reached England in the winter, or rather in the beginning of spring, and shall never forget the feeling of wonder, not to say dismay, with which I beheld the skeleton trees visible here and there on the banks of the Mersey.

I imagined, not unnaturally, that some terrible bush fire had recently desolated the country round, and marvelled how the houses had escaped; but a remark which I made to that effect to a group of my fellow-passengers was received with such roars of laughter that I soon perceived I had made some ridiculous mistake, and hastened to explain that I was joking. It was a long time, however, before the impression wore away.

My mind was filled with conflicting emotions, in which, I think, amazement predominated, as our vessel was slowly tugged up the river to the berth it was to occupy until its living cargo was discharged. I had never

seen so many ships together before; and I felt, very unnecessarily, humiliated by the comparison I mentally instituted between my father's native land and my own.

I say "unnecessarily," for upon landing I found the difference between Liverpool and Melbourne not nearly so great as I had anticipated. True, the former is larger and has miles of docks, whereas my native city then had none; but both are busy, bustling places, both are frequented by crowds of strangers from every corner of the globe, and both rush to the discharge of the daily duties of a commercial life with an alacrity and zest—a restless thirsting after gain—utterly unknown in the *ci-devant* capital which for several years was my compulsory abode.

I had no acquaintances in Liverpool. My fellow-passengers promptly dispersed to their several destinations, and I was left alone—alone, in the midst of thousands.

A feeling of desolation came over me, ten times more intense than if I had been hopelessly lost in the Mallee Scrub, or some kindred impenetrable wilderness. The waiter at the hotel where I had put up had a brother in Australia, he informed me; and that fact forming, as it were, a connecting link between us, he interested himself greatly in my behalf, and procured a conveyance to take me and my luggage to the Clarence Dock; whence, that evening, I found myself once more at sea on my way to Dublin, where my mother had relations, with whom it had been arranged I was to reside until the completion of my pupilage.

Those friends received me very kindly, and I soon began to feel, to some degree, at home among them; though there was much to annoy and disgust, and but little to attract me in my new abode. Spring, however, was advancing, and one great bugbear, the leafless trees, disappeared. I soon gazed upon a vegetation greener and fresher than anything I had ever seen before, or could have possibly imagined. In fact, I shortly found myself half ready to admit that a winter of nearly six months' duration was not too great a price to pay for the resurrection of the year.

I had heard much, whilst in my own home, of the marvellous songs of British birds; but must confess I was disappointed in them all, especially the thrush; and then their plumage!

"They are neat, but not gaudy," observed

a friend to whom I had confided my feelings on the subject.

"Very neat," I replied; "but I wish you could see our lowries, and hear our magpies sing."

I was soon fully occupied by my studies; but nevertheless pined, with a sickening sense of longing, for the dear old familiar faces, and the old familiar scenes at home.

No green leaves, no melodious song birds, could compensate me for their loss; but I was not to be companionless for ever.

In one of my rambles through an obscure quarter of the city I discovered a bird shop, where were caged a number of parrots from my native land; a cockatoo, a rosella parakeet, and several pairs of love birds—we call them budgerigars.

I stopped and stared at the captives with tears in my eyes.

Were we not fellow-prisoners, fellow-exiles, at any rate?

I spoke to them, and the cockatoo positively recognised me.

He had been sitting listlessly upon his perch, thinking no doubt of the home he had lost and the dear ones he had left behind among the aromatic gum trees in the old familiar bush; but as soon as he heard my voice he roused himself, shook his snowy plumage, expanded his sulphur crest, and screamed his recognition of his fellow-countryman with a vigour that won my heart upon the spot. I bought him, I bought the rosella, and a pair of budgerigars, and brought them home in triumph.

As the summer advanced, I took long walks into the country during my leisure hours; and, in spite of the invidious walls that shut out nature from my sight on every side, saw that it was beautiful; many spots reminding me, not unpleasantly, of home.

When winter returned it found me resigned to my fate, or at least wishful to be resigned; but the fallen leaves, the shortening hours of daylight, and the keen east winds, keener than anything I had ever experienced, save the icy breezes blowing over the snowy mountains of the southern polar regions, with which I had become acquainted during the passage round Cape Horn, upset my equanimity again, and more than once I felt strongly tempted to throw up my studies, and return home to Australia; but love for my profession, as I would fain have persuaded myself, prevailed, and I remained to do battle with the rigour of the climate,

and all the manifold sources of discomfort which surrounded me.

Several years passed away, not uneventfully, and I grew gradually accustomed to the people amongst whom I lived; unconsciously I acquired their mode of speech, insensibly I adopted their habits, and began to feel myself at home. The green leaves of spring and the naked twigs of winter ceased to affect me, either pleasurably or otherwise. My friends not unfrequently permitted themselves to congratulate me upon my acclimatisation—they were too well bred to say "civilization," but I knew they meant it; and thoughts even occurred to me, now and then, that a man might spend his days comfortably in the old country, after all.

The long-looked-for day of my emancipation at length drew near; my course of study was at an end, the horrors of a public examination were successfully braved, and I was free.

Free to practise my profession where I chose; free to return to my native land as speedily as I wished. Yet I lingered.

Strange to say, I lingered. When the door of my cage was thrown open, and I was at perfect liberty to choose between captivity and freedom, I hesitated. Like a long-imprisoned bird, I feared to exercise my unaccustomed wings, and loitered near the spot which I had once so deeply hated, but had almost begun to love.

"You really ought to see some more of the country," urged my friends, "before you finally make up your mind to leave us."

They little knew I was no longer a free agent; but I answered—

"I have seen quite enough of it, thank you, and must hurry home."

But I did nothing of the sort.

"Old fellow," insinuatingly pleaded one whom I had come to consider as a brother, "you have nothing on earth to do, and I am particularly busy just now: will you take a run for me down to Dumfrynaghalee, and canvass the country on my behalf?"

"Cool," I replied. "Dumfrynaghalee—what d'ye call it?—is at the very confines of the universe—one step beyond—and I should find myself landed in the middle of next week, or the Atlantic Ocean."

"Never fear," my friend replied, and I yielded.

When my heart was beating a wonderfully accelerated measure at the thought of going home, I yielded to the entreaties of

friendship, and turned my steps towards the ultima thule of the West.

"I shall never survive it, I know," I said, as I bade my chum farewell on the platform of the Great Northern. "I offer myself a sacrifice on the altar of friendship."

"The gods will reward you, old fellow!" he replied, laughing, as we shook hands through the window of the carriage; and I was directly afterwards whirled off on my wild-goose chase—for such my adventure proved to be.

The morning was dry and cold when we started, and we bowled along pleasantly enough. My companions were an old clergyman, whom I knew by sight, but who, probably, did not recollect ever having laid eyes on me before, and two comfortable-looking farmers, who got out at the first stopping-place; by which it will be perceived that I travelled second class.

As we sped along the level country, with the sea on our right hand and the green fields on our left, I almost fancied myself taking a run up from Geelong to Melbourne; and was almost deluded into a temporary belief that such was, indeed, the case by the great resemblance of an iron bridge—over which we passed—to one that crosses the Salt-water River at Footscray, about as far distant from the capital of Victoria as this was from the metropolis of Ireland.

I say "almost," for the small fields and the immense hedges and ditches entirely precluded the possibility of my entertaining the delusion for more than a moment. Then, again, it was quite impossible to confound the Irish cabins that we passed in review from time to time with the neat log-huts of our settlers.

Why, in the name of common sense, cannot the peasants of the Green Isle, as they call it, put their manure heaps a little farther off from the doors of their abodes? And why, in a country where land is so valuable, can they not use posts and rails to divide their fields, as we do?

I once heard a Scotchman—I love Scotch folk, and fancy I must be descended from a Scot myself—I once heard a Scotchman declare that the Irish were a "feckless" race.

I have not the least idea what he meant; though, judging from his manner, I should say the expression was deprecatory. Still, as I know not to what extent, perhaps I had better not endorse it.

But to proceed. We passed several villages, poor-looking enough, in all conscience, and some handsome villa residences, in painful contrast with the squalor around; but made no stoppage until we reached a town with a hideously guttural name, the scene of some of the Protector's most terrible exploits; and there I began to realise that I was, indeed, in Ireland.

Dublin I had become pretty well used to, and I fancy I have beheld sights in some of its back lanes and alleys of which few, if any, of the inhabitants of its squares and fashionable suburbs can have the least conception. I had grown used to such scenes, however, and they had ceased to affect me in any way.

Indeed, I had seen something similar in Melbourne during the height of the gold fever, while visiting with my father among the poor new arrivals—chiefly Irish, too, by the bye—in the back slums of our city.

But there such a state of things could, of necessity, be but of temporary duration. New-comers soon obtained employment, and with good wages come cleanliness and comfort.

In Dublin, however, dirt and misery, I found, were chronic amongst the lower orders, and I soon grew hardened to the fact. But I was not prepared to find these sad features of extreme civilization repeated in the country.

In our "country," as we call the bush, such a state of affairs is, happily, quite unknown. Our country towns are neat and pretty in their freshness. With us every one has enough to eat, and something to lay by; or, if he has not, he can have no one to blame but himself. But in the Irish villages and towns, with a few exceptions as far as I could judge, I discovered the city repeated, again and again, in its most disagreeable aspects, and I felt sorry and surprised.

The soil of the country through which we had passed seemed to be of inferior quality, for the crops were very thin and poor, and much of the land was fallow. It was all cut up by huge hedges and ditches into scraps and parcels of every possible shape, and ludicrously small dimensions—an arrangement which imparted to the landscape the appearance of a sheet of paper covered with problems in Euclid, laid side by side.

The constabulary, fine soldierly-looking fellows, very much like our own up-country mounted police, mustered in great force

at the different stations; and the thought occurred to me that they might be on the look-out for Fenians—something similar, I imagined, to our bushrangers, and a name which was then in everybody's mouth.

A few miles farther on the country became extremely picturesque; to the left were well-cultivated hills, and to the right an apparently prosperous town, situated on the banks of a navigable river, in a sheltered valley, beyond which rose lofty mountain peaks, visible for many miles around.

After this point the fields grew gradually larger, the cottages tidier, the great wasteful ditches were replaced by stone walls—"rubble," we term them—built without mortar; and by the side of the railway I perceived a neat building, labelled, if I might use the word in such a connection, "Scriptural Schools," showing that we had entered upon the protesting North.

"There are two sorts of people in Ireland, sir," said an old gentleman to me one day—"two distinct races; I might, indeed, say three: the aboriginal, of Celtic origin, and the descendants of the Scotch and English colonists; somewhat mixed nowadays, it is true, but still sufficiently separate to be discernible at a glance. The former predominate in the south and west, the latter in the east and north; and although the first enjoy every natural advantage of climate, soil, and situation the island affords, I would like to know where the wealth, industry, and energy of the country are to be found? In the east, sir; but more especially in the sturdy north." So far, the old gentleman was incontrovertibly in the right.

"Yes, sir," he continued, "we have two distinct races in Ireland, as you have in Australia"—I had told him I came from that country—"the aboriginal and the colonial, both equally Irish, and utterly unlike; equally Australian, and totally dissimilar. You, sir, and I are of colonial, and yon open-mouthed clodhoppers"—here he pointed to some natives who were passing—"hewers of wood and drawers of water in every land, who have just sufficient intelligence to grow a few potatoes and rear a pig, which shares their bed; and the skin-clad black fellows who roam through your bush, subsisting on the precarious produce of their chase, which, you tell me, they devour raw—are of aboriginal origin, and as different from you and me as black from white."

A great deal more he added to the same effect—even going so far as to assert that "no amount of civilizing influence could elevate a thoroughbred Celt or an aboriginal Australian to the level of the humblest of their Saxon fellow-countrymen."

Of course I dissent entirely from such extravagant sentiments; but at the time I made no remark, hating arguments with testy old gentlemen from my heart.

As we made a stoppage of some minutes at Dunlennon, I got out for the double purpose of stretching my legs, and obtaining "a thimbleful of the native"—we say a "nobbler," in my country, Anglice, "something to drink"—to keep out the cold, which was intense.

The clergyman, to whom I have already alluded as my fellow-passenger, caught me in the act of replacing the empty glass upon the counter of the refreshment saloon, and threw up his eyes and groaned, as if, like Artemus Ward's Shaker, he would have ejaculated "Man of Sin!" but for the severity of the weather.

"Oil, sir," I cheerily observed, addressing him, "to grease the wheels of life."

"Wears them out, my young friend," he gloomily replied, and shivered; but whether with indignation or from the cold I could not determine.

"Possibly," I returned; "but certainly makes them roll along without creaking."

Whereupon he immediately walked out of the bar, without partaking of any refreshment.

Soon afterwards, our course lying through the very centre of an enormous bog, a terrible snowstorm burst upon us, and for miles the ground was white, which, as the country became mountainous when once we had crossed the bog, imparted an Alpine appearance to the landscape, which, to me, was as full of interest as it was novel; for I had never seen anything of the kind before, except at a distance, on the Dublin mountains.

We then crossed a fine river, which, a little farther on, I could see, was spanned by a queer, old, high-backed bridge, that looked for all the world, with its funny little arches, like a huge megatherium about to take a drink.

Omara—I am not quite certain of my orthography—where we next halted, is a pretty, comfortable little town, and reminded me somewhat of Castlemaine, although, of

course, older, more settled-down looking, and especially more Irish.

A great butter fair, I was told, was held there several times a year, when it was no uncommon thing for thirty thousand pounds—sterling, not pounds of butter—to change hands. But I cannot help thinking my informant exaggerated.

Whether or not, Omara seemed to be a thriving place, where, during a stay of half an hour, I did not see a single beggar—a phenomenon which may, certainly, have been due to the fact that the poor creatures who importune the traveller for alms elsewhere were there shut up in a fine range of buildings just outside the town, which, I learned on inquiry, was the workhouse.

We have no such places in Australia, and, what is better, no need of them; and, moreover, I trust and believe we never shall.

More rivers, and more megatherium bridges! Ireland is a well-watered country; and yet, strange to say, the vast motive power thus placed by nature at the disposal of the inhabitants is put to little or no use. What a mine of wealth it would be to us in Australia.

At Banford, I left the railway carriage, and embarked myself and my portmanteau on board of one of Bianconi's famous conveyances, which afford a very delightful mode of progression, I have no doubt, on a fine summer's day, but are by no means conducive to the traveller's comfort with the thermometer at zero, or below it, and an easterly wind, laden with hail and sleet, blowing right into his face, with a keenness enough almost to cut his ears off.

But for the kindness of a fellow-passenger, I believe I should never have survived to tell the tale.

At first I thought, from his quiet manner and shaven cheeks, that he was a priest; but after he had produced a flask of excellent whisky, which he good-naturedly insisted upon sharing with me, and talked of Shoeburyness, I concluded that he must be a soldier; but was induced to resume my former opinion upon his subsequently informing me that Rome, whence he had just returned on an embassy—from whom or to whom did not appear—was a most delightful residence.

Be his occupation what it may—peace or war—he had my fervent thanks; for he not only shared his whisky with me, but, as he

sat before me on the car, shielded me in a great measure from the violence of the storm, which accompanied us all the way to Pennyletter, a distance of fifteen Irish miles.

Perhaps because I had more leisure to become acquainted with it, this little town is by far the pleasantest place I was ever in in Ireland. The houses are very good, and the streets and shops lit up with gas. It contains a first-rate hotel, and rather more than the usual complement of churches, belonging to the different denominations; but society, I was given to understand, existed there in a very divided state, no three families being on visiting terms with one another. The Armstrongs, for instance, looked down upon the Browns, because the latter were on friendly terms with the Joneses, whom the former considered to be beneath their notice, in consequence of their having relations who were engaged in trade; whilst the Joneses, on their part, affected to turn up their noses at the Armstrongs on account of their not keeping a carriage, which the latter could not afford.

But it is the same everywhere. I recollect, at home, two black fellows, brothers, who had lived together, with their respective lubras, in perfect amity for years, falling out in consequence of a present of a pair of red blankets made by some benevolent squatter to Corrinwarra and his spouse, who thereupon immediately turned their backs upon poor Jika Jika and his jin, who had nothing better than opossum skins wherewith to keep themselves warm.

Rain, snow, and hail. I never remember such a night as the first I spent in Pennyletter. I fancied the windows of my bedroom would have been blown in a dozen times; and when the waiter came to call me at half-past six, as I had told him to do, my courage failed me, and I decided upon waiting for the afternoon conveyance; as another long drive of eighteen miles or so, on an Irish car, in the dark, through a very hilly country, even though the roads were good, was not, by any means, a pleasant prospect.

I wonder, by the way, who was the inventor of those Irish cars?—those lobsided affairs that either pitch the traveller off, or tumble him up against his neighbour in the most uncomfortable manner at every jolt.

It was a long time before I could keep my seat on one of them, with any degree of com-

fort; and I shall not soon forget the toss I got upon the day of my arrival in the metropolis. I had been induced by the frantic appeals of a very ragged Jehu to trust myself and my belongings on his rickety vehicle, where I sat in fear and trembling.

"Hould yer houl't, now, yer honour!" he presently shouted as we rounded the corner of a street at a brilliant pace.

Not understanding exactly what was said, and imagining a 'houl't' to besomething I was to clutch in order to secure my seat upon the car, I seized the only available protection I could see—namely, the little box in front, upon which the driver perches himself when both sides of the conveyance are occupied; whereupon the crazy structure gave way, and I was thrown into the mud, much to my discomfiture, and the intense amusement of the passers-by.

Dumfernaghalee is a small village, of which I shall have a good deal more to say by and by. It contains some four or five hundred inhabitants, and is situated on a creek or bay of the Atlantic.

It is a self-supporting place, and belongs to the great man of the district—who, I soon discovered, is more absolute down there than was ever poor mad Theodore among his Abyssinians; or King Kamehameha, that astute Kanaka, who so quietly revolutionized his little kingdom not long since, could ever have presumed to be in the Sandwich Islands.

The scenery around Dumfernaghalee, without being of a grand description, is still sufficiently pleasing, for it neither fatigues the eye by a perpetual recurrence of lofty mountain peaks, which give one a crick in the neck to look up at, nor wearies it by an endless monotony of plain. Both features, and every gradation between the two, occur at varying intervals in the landscape, and afforded me the most gratifying glimpse of nature I had seen since my departure from Australia; whilst the booming sound of the Atlantic waves, as they surged over the bar at the entrance to the harbour, lent a solemnity to the scene which, in my eyes, added materially to its attractions.

The bogs, I was given to understand, and subsequently realized the fact for myself, are well stocked with snipe and woodcock, very much like our own in appearance, and quite as good to eat; while the rivers teem with trout and the wonderful salmon, which

has at length been successfully introduced into our waters.

The morning after my arrival—for I was much too tired to think of business overnight—I made some inquiries of my landlord concerning the appointment for which my friend had deputed me to canvass.

I might as well have stayed in Dublin.

"The whole place," said my host, "belongs to the Squire; all the guardians are his tenants, and will vote for whoever his agent bids them; and he will appoint some friend of his own, unless he has received his instructions from the Castle."

"In that case," said I, "my friend has no chance?"

"Not a mite of one," replied the landlord; "never mind his merits, whatever they may be, unless he has houl't of the Squire's ear."

"That I am sure he has not."

"Well, then, it's no use your staying, and the Rector will tell you the same."

I called on the Rector, of whom I shall have more to say by and by, and he corroborated the landlord's statement; adding that his own was the only independent vote in the place, and he had promised it to another.

Under the circumstances, there was nothing left for me to do but return the way I came, as speedily as might be.

I had the whole day before me, and thought I might as well call upon the agent, and hear what he had to say.

I found him to be a very affable Scotchman, to whom I took quite a fancy at first sight. He asked me to dinner, and, in post-prandial confidence, informed me that the appointment had been offered to, and accepted by, a protégé of the Squire's; and was considerate enough to add that he was sorry for it.

If the elements had been adverse on my downward journey, they were yet more unpropitious on my return.

It rained, hailed, and snowed with increased vigour the whole way back to Penny-letter.

About half-way between Dumfernaghalee and that jolly little town lies the village of Moighrath, which I had overlooked upon my first passing through it in the dark.

It was daylight, however, when I returned; and the street—there is but one in the place, and that not particularly lively on ordinary occasions—was, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, thronged with stalwart men

engaged in buying and selling horses, cows, and pigs, for it was the monthly fair.

Pretty girls were there, too, in blue cloaks with hoods of the same colour, from under which flashed the roguish glances of merry gray eyes, like the twinkling of stars through the fleecy clouds of a summer evening sky.

Old women, too, were there in numbers, with neat white caps and warm, comfortable-looking cloaks. These ladies were selling yarn, and chaffing the youngsters or chatting with the old men, who, in their knee-breeches and gray stockings, recalled the memory of days which are rapidly passing away.

All were sober and busy as bees.

The results of my wild-goose chase may be briefly summed up as follows:

I caught a horrid cold in my head, from the effects of which a considerable time elapsed before I entirely recovered.

I found that in Dumfernaghalee, as in more illustrious places, "kissing goes by favour;" and that, if one is looking for an appointment, and happens not to have possession of the local magnate's ear, one had better save one's money and remain at home.

Lastly, I discovered, with a certain amount of surprise, that Ireland was not such a terrible place, after all; and that one might travel from one end of it to the other with entire safety; in fact, that a man might even live in it, and be—after a fashion—comfortable, too; but that I had suspected for some time.

EPSOM NOTES.

THE title that stands at the head of this article will appear very often in all the papers this month, having reference to the candidates for the great races that are to be celebrated there in due annual course. The Epsom notes of our contemporaries will record the early gallops of the Derby favourites, the horses under orders for the Downs, and end by selecting the winner of the Derby. No reader of ours will suspect from our title that we intend to give a loose to our spirit of prophecy, and attempt to anticipate Mr. Clark's verdict; or that we have anything to say concerning the latest news from the training grounds. Our only intention, indeed, is to put down a few seasonable notes about a place that will be visited by everybody who can get there, and whose

name will be on everybody's tongue in this present "merrie month of May."

When racing first began at Epsom is not known with any certainty. The old writers about the place simply state the fact that horse-races are annually held on Epsom Downs. It seems probable that at first there were no regular periodical meetings, but that the races were occasional. King James I. is generally put down as the first royal patron of the sport there, and perhaps the first institutor of it. Races were not uncommon there in the reign of his ill-fated successor, Charles I. Clarendon writes that, soon after the 18th May, 1648, "a meeting of the Royalists was held on Banstead (Epsom) Downs under the pretence of a horse-race, and six hundred horses were collected and marched to Reigate."

From this quotation it is clear that Epsom Downs were chosen because it would be no unusual sight for a number of horsemen and others to be collected there at a horse-race.

The Commonwealth saw no retrograde steps in the breeding of horses; Mr. Place, stud-master to Cromwell, being owner of the famous horse, White Turk. After the restoration of King Charles II., as is well known, horse-racing flourished apace, and most of our monarchs since the third Stuart have given this national sport their countenance and support.

Epsom Downs have been the arena on which annual races have been held since the year 1730, in the months of May or June, as at present. In olden times, the ball was set rolling at eleven o'clock in the forenoon; after witnessing one or two heats, the whole of the company returned to the town and partook of dinner, proceedings on the Downs being reopened in the afternoon.

The Derby was first established in 1780, the Oaks in 1779.

The Derby used (1800 to 1825) to be run on Thursday in the week before Whitsuntide. This was the fashionable day for visiting the races, as Wednesday is at present. Precisely half a century ago, it was estimated that 60,000 persons attended on Thursday to see the Derby run for. This number included many of the nobility and several members of the Royal family. Many more people assemble now on the Wednesday in Derby week, and we often hear complaints of little trinkets missing after the visit from the persons of the unwary. It may be some slight consolation to a man who has

lost his watch to know that, from time immemorial, others have met with the same fate there.

An old chronicle says of the Derby day — "It therefore generally follows that many atrocities are committed; and those who fortunately escape the numerous accidents which occur have to lament the loss of some portion of their property."

TABLE TALK.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the publication of the Emperor Napoleon's will appears a memoir of the Emperor, to which is added a political poem, called "Rip Van Winkle," written by Mr. George Browning. The old man, after sleeping from 1771 to 1871, says:—

"I've been asleep for a hundred years,
I awake, and what do I find?
I find that the golden age is still
A long, long way behind.

When first I awoke I shook myself,
And walked the village thro';
The folk they stared, and many a face
I met that I *thought* I knew.

I came to the ale-house door, and I said,
No harm in a little beer;
If any know me at all in the place,
I'm certain to find 'em here.

I took up a pipe, and sat me down,
Yet wondered hard at the change
That suddenly had seized my mates,
And the place, too, seemed so strange.

I filled my pipe, and called for a mug
Of their small table beer;
The landlord looked as if dignity-hurt,
And said, 'We don't serve it *here*.'

Having been told that Du Barry and Pompadour are dead, and of the changes in French affairs, he—Rip Van Winkle—concludes with—

"'Enough!' I cried, 'I can see 'tis the same,
The same old kind of tale;
The world itself is fair enough,
But the people are still at rail.

'I've been asleep for a long, long time,
And I'll go to sleep again—
And when I awake, I hope I may find
A purer race of men.'"

"FLEUR-DE-LYS," the opera bouffe which has taken the place of the eminently successful "Geneviève de Brabant" at the Philharmonic Theatre at Islington, is sufficiently attractive to form a worthy successor to the best opera bouffe ever produced in London. The libretto is from the pen of

Mr. Farnie, and he shows great skill in the construction of the piece; while the dialogue, if inferior to that of the "Happy Land," at the Court Theatre, is brisk enough, and the political allusions it contains are clever enough, to hold the attention and call forth the plaudits of the audience. The music, which must ever be the chief matter in burlesque opera, is composed by M. Leo Délibes, and is bright and sparkling throughout. "Fleur-de-Lys" is in a prologue and two acts, the last scene being incomparably the best. The Prince Hyacinth of Miss Emily Soldene is nearly if not quite as good as her Drogon in "Geneviève de Brabant." She is well supported by the Fleur-de-Lys of Miss Dolaro, the Professor of Mr. C. W. Norton, and the King Toc-e-Toc and Grand Duke of Madapolam of Messrs. Chessman and Marshall. The dresses of the piece are superb; the scenery is all that the most critical can desire; and, as a whole, we congratulate Mr. Morton upon a piece which is very likely to run as long as our old friend, "Geneviève de Brabant."

A CORRESPONDENT: I have to submit two instances of apt production of Holy Writ, to neither of which, I think, can anybody object on the score of irreverence. In the first, an old clergyman was asked by his son, who was also a parson, to preach at his church. The young man, whose views differed entirely from those of his parent, was most delighted at his acquiescence, which, he thought, showed that the elder was gained over to his way of thinking. But his hopes were dashed to the ground when his father gave out for his text Matthew, xvii. verse 15: "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatick." The second case happened to a field officer in the army, who was at school with me. Sending unpaid to a former schoolmaster an envelope full of potato skins, he received it back by return of post. On being foolish enough to pay sixteenpence—a great sum for a schoolboy—he opened the covering envelope, and saw inside its flap this simple statement:—Prov., xii. v. 16: "A fool's wrath is presently known."

Contributions should be legibly written, and only on one side of each leaf.

The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the Office, 19, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden, W. C.

ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 281.

May 17, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

A *Nobel*.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XLIII.



WEARIED in body and mind, Marie landed at the old familiar wharf at Port St. Denys. Five and twenty years since last she stood there, filled with the bitter-

ness of regret, and yet the confidence of youthful hope. She recalled now the moment when, standing on the deck, she marked the mountains growing fainter and darker as the sun set, plunging them in a bath of light and colour, till night came on, and they disappeared. Now she stood once more on the wharf, and marked the old things little changed. The half-naked Indians rolled the sugar-bags about, and piled them in great heaps, with their shrill cries and wild laughter, just as she remembered to have watched them as a child. Under the trees on the Place sat the same old men—or they seemed to be the same—who had always sat there, talking and squabbling over the

little politics of the day. Among the talkers under the trees rolled and played the little naked mulatto and Indian children, as they had always done; and in long line stood the carriages waiting to be hired, as they had stood a quarter of a century since. Nothing was changed; and for a moment the years rolled back, and all her youth flashed again before her, with its happiness, such as it was, and its regrets. Only for a moment. One of the ship's officers, seeing her standing alone, proffered his assistance, and Marie woke to a sense of the dismal errand on which she had come.

"I have got your boxes on shore, Madame de Guyon," he said; "what shall I do with them next? You had better let me get you a carriage. Have you no friends waiting for you?"

"No," said Marie. "I am going into the country. It is a long drive. Will you kindly see that the man has good horses? I am going quite to the other side of the island."

"You are surely not going alone, Madame de Guyon?"

"Not alone! Why not? Oh, I have never told you that I was here as a girl. I know every road in the place, I believe. Thank you, Mr. Hatton, for your kindness. If you will only, now, get me a carriage."

Presently came rattling up a long, low carriage, with a pair of screws that looked like anything in the world except going a long journey.

Marie said something to the officer, who spoke to the driver. He was a mulatto, approaching very nearly to the negro type, with woolly head, and face almost black. He was apparently about fifty, and was accompanied by a little boy, clothed chiefly in a ragged straw hat, half a jacket, and say a quarter of a pair of cotton trousers. He answered the officer's objections, laughing and protesting in a patois that made Marie's heart leap within her, for it was the patois

that she had first learned to speak. She understood it all, after these long years: the intonation of the voice, the gestures which eked out the imperfections of the language, the rough, rude inflections of the barbaric tongue; and she asked herself whether, in the far past, she herself could have been as these naked children rolling in the dust, could have talked this jargon, could have been such as her driver. Getting into the carriage, however, she explained to him that she was to go to the estate of Fontainebleau.

"How, madame?" said the man. "No one lives at Fontainebleau since Mr. Durnford died."

"You know the place, then?"

"I was born there, madame. My parents lived close by." He called them his "papa and mamma," this grizzily mulatto.

"But Mr. Philip Durnford lives there now."

"Madame wants to see Mr. Philip? Oh!"

He jumped upon his box, called the boy, whipped up his horses, and went swinging down the street at full gallop. The boy kept prattling to him, but he made no answer. When they had gone some three or four miles, taking advantage of a hill, he turned round, and poking his head into the carriage, he remarked, in a tone as if he were conveying information—

"Madame is going to see Mr. Philip Durnford."

Some five or six miles farther on, he put his head in again—

"Does madame know Mr. Philip?"

Marie said she had seen him.

"A mauvais sujet, madame. Alphonse, take the reins. Do not whip them, my child. I will tell you, madame. Ah! brigand, you want to repose already? Up, then. Alphonse, take the whip to that vaurien." This was addressed chiefly to his horses. "Madame, I am about to tell you, M. Philip—why do I say monsieur?—he is the son of old Mr. Durnford, who died in the cholera, and the little Marie. Pah! everybody knows that."

Poor Marie!

"Philip goes to England with Mr. Arthur. There was a young man, madame. Philip stays for seven, eight years. He comes back without Mr. Arthur. He says the estate is his; and he lives there."

"Who was Marie?" asked the poor mother.

"Marie? I will tell you, madame. There was a young lady, white as a lily, who lived in the great house close by my father's hut. She was lonely, and had no one to play with, and so they took my little sister, who was almost as fair as she was—"

"Your sister! You are Adolphe?"

"Madame knows my name? See, madame." He produced a sort of card, on which was printed a tariff of prices. It was inscribed with the names, in full, "Monsieur Adolphe Napoleon Rohan de Montmorenci." This he read out with unction. "How did madame know my name? My nephew, who went to the great college, gave me the surnames; for I must confess to madame, who knows everything, that I was formerly plain Adolphe. Alphonse, with all your force, flog that vieux scelerat who will do no work."

The intelligent steed, hearing this, instantly quickened, and Alphonse put back the whip.

"Yes, madame," he resumed, "Marie was as fair-cheeked as Mademoiselle Adrienne herself. Only mademoiselle had light hair, and Marie black. Droll, was it not? I was as black as Alphonse here, and so was my brother Alcide; and Marie was as white as a lady. Eh, the vieux papa used to laugh when he looked at her. Only the priest said it was the will of God. Well, madame, Marie went to live with mademoiselle, and stayed there till she was fifteen years old. Then she ran away."

"Where did she go to?"

"Oh, I know, because I saw her often enough. She lived for a year in a little cottage close by Mr. Durnford's house, in the forest. There she had a baby, white as—as—" here his eyes wandered to little Alphonse for a suitable simile, but, not finding one in his brown face, he turned back to the carriage—"as white as madame herself."

"Well?"

"Well, madame, that baby is Philip himself. You could hardly believe it, but it is so. And I who sit here am his uncle. Ha! ha! ha! Alphonse is his cousin. Ho! ho! ho! But it's droll."

"And—and—your sister?"

"Mr. Durnford married ma'm'selle, and poor Marie went away. She came back, though, and walked all the way to Fontainebleau through the forest—Alcide saw her—on the night after Madame Durnford was buried. Then she went away

again, and no one has heard of her since. Poor Marie! She was too good for us, and the bon Dieu took her to heaven."

"Good? When she lived with Mr. Durnford?"

"Eh?" said the black, "why not? Ah! she was gentle. You should have seen her, madame, go to church with her white kid gloves, and her silk parasol, and a rosebud in her hair. All the white folks stared at her. Poor Marie! But the bon Dieu has taken her, and her son is a vaurien. Alphonse, if the idler does not go quicker, get down and kick him."

The idler instantly quickened repentantly.

"He is a vaurien, I say, madame. He drinks in the morning, he drinks all day, he drinks at night, and he goes to bed—saoul. No one goes to see him. He lives alone, he sees ghosts, he laughs and cries. The servants run away. Last week one ventured to sit up and watch him all night. He gets up, takes a pistol, and—ping!—if the boy had not ducked his head, like this, he would have been killed. Alphonse, thou laughest? Malin! He is very dangerous, madame. And madame is going to see him?"

Presently they left the high road, and turned down a rudely made lane, cut through the forest. The still, quiet air recalled all the old moments to Marie. She remembered when George Durnford, her lover, made the road; and here, before it was finished, he would walk and talk with her in the evening, telling her a thousand things she had never dreamed of, opening up paths for her thoughts which she had never suspected, lifting her above the petty things that she had been accustomed to feed her mind with, and filling her mind with a happiness that was all the sweeter as it was the newer and more unexpected. Forgetting her present miseries, an involuntary smile wreathed her lips, and her eyes glowed again with the brightness of her youth, as she thought of those days, all too brief, of love and tenderness. Do women ever repent of first love? I think not. The man repents, thinking of the wreck he has made of a woman's happiness. She weeps, not for the folly and the sin, but for the shattered image, the perished hopes, and the cruel punishment. Guilt? What guilt was there in the young mulatto girl, who, knowing that she could never be aught but the white man's mistress, yet ran willingly into his arms, and obeyed the instincts of a passionate nature

that knew no religion and had no sense of a higher duty? Thousands of times had poor Marie, in the height of her popularity and fame, pondered over the question; and, against all the dogmas of creed, had acquitted herself. And thousands of times, besides, had she willingly acquiesced in the results of the social necessity under which we are all slaves.

The road, winding through thick under-wood, presently crossed a rude wooden bridge over a small ravine. Marie made the driver stop, and leaned out of the carriage, looking at a scene she remembered so well. On the steep, damp sides, towering above the tangled herbage, grew the tall tree ferns, each with its circle of glory, clear cut against the blue of the sky; along the foot bubbled a little mountain stream over great boulders that lay strewn about. Just above the bridge was a tiny waterfall of some three or four feet, over which the water leaped merrily, with as much fuss and splash as if it were a great Niagara. And above the fall, huddled together and gazing with suspicious eyes on the carriage, stood a herd of twenty or thirty soft-eyed deer. But not on them were Marie's eyes resting; for half hidden within the trees stood the remains of an old cottage, the thatch half torn off, and covered with creepers, the door hanging by one hinge, the door-posts wrenched out by the force of a growing tree, and the whole place presenting a dreary look of desolation.

Calling Adolphe, she pointed it out to him, with a look of interrogation.

"It is the cottage of Marie, madame. That is where Mr. Durnford put her when she left ma'm'selle. He thought no one knew. But I knew, and many a time I've lain down there watching Mr. Durnford coming to call her out. Every evening he used to come, and all day long Marie used to sit and wait, looking along the path where he would come."

It was so true; and her heart was pierced to think how this poor fellow, her own brother, not ashamed of her disgrace, would lie and wait to see her lover come.

"Mr. Durnford taught her to read, madame; and then she used to sit at the window with a book all the day, and at night would tell him all she had learned. Eh? I have listened often at the window. But it did not last long. Then she went away; and then she came back. And then

—I don't know where she went. The bon Dieu took her."

"Why do you think she is dead?"

"Madame, I will tell you. Because—how long ago? Alphonse, how old are you?"

"How should I know?" said the boy.

"Well, it was twelve years before Alphonse was born. I was down here, it was the cholera time. Ouf! what a time! No one died here except Mr. Durnford; but the night he died I was passing through this road, and in the moonlight just here, I saw two figures in white—one was Marie and the other was Mr. Durnford. Since then, no one has passed by here at night."

"How do you know it was Marie?"

"What a droll question. As if I should not know my own sister."

They went on, and, as they drew near the house, Marie began to think what she should say to her son, and how she would be received. Her long voyage was ended, but the uncertainty of it remained yet. Nor had she ever realized until now the almost utter hopelessness of her journey. She was to save her boy. But how? By what subtle art was that ruined nature to be raised—that seared conscience to become softened? Alas! she knew not that what she hoped to effect by pleading, the mystery of pain and suffering was even then accomplishing.

The carriage drew up in front of the verandah. She got out, and told the driver—her brother—to put down her boxes, and to drive back.

No one received her. It was strange. In the old days, when a visitor arrived, troops of servants came running. Now, not one. The verandah, too, once like a well-ordered apartment, with its matting, the blinds, the long chairs and little tables, now stood stripped of all. The floor of concrete was in holes. The old ropes of the blinds hung helplessly about. Creepers climbed up the posts, and trailed along the woodwork of the roof. Outside, the pretty rose garden was all destroyed, and grown over. The mill beyond was closed. There was no sign of work or noise from the adjacent "camp," which seemed deserted; no voice from the house within, no barking of dogs, or clattering of hoofs. A strange dread came upon Marie. She shivered from head to foot. It was too late to recall her carriage, which was now out of sight, and almost out of hearing. And with a dull foreboding of

sorrow she entered the house which, four and twenty years ago, she had quitted with such repentance and regrets.

The old furniture was there, in its old places; but dust-covered, mildewed, and uncared-for. No one was in the salon, no one in the dining-room. Avoiding the rooms to the right, which had been those of George Durnford, she went into the smaller bedrooms on the left, put up originally for children and guest-rooms. These, with all their old furniture, which she remembered so well, had yet a dreary and desolate look. Only, in one, provided with a deal table, a bookcase, and a few chairs, lay the relics of the days when her son, whom she had seen so seldom, was yet but a child. In one corner were the broken toys of the two boys. On the shelves lay the old well-thumbed grammars and school books. Damp had loosened the bindings; white ants had burrowed long passages through them; the cockroaches had gnawed away the leather; and when she moved them, a whole colony of scorpions ran out, brandishing their tails in frantic assertion of their long-established rights. She turned away sorrowfully, and once more entering the dining-room, went in, with sinking of heart, to the great bedroom beyond. The silence and stillness of the house oppressed her. It seemed haunted with ghosts of the days gone by; and added to this was the dread of something, she knew not what, which she might find within.

Twice she tried to turn the handle of the door; twice her heart failed her. She went to the well-known buffet in the dining-room, where water always stood, and drank a glass of it. That, at least, in its red earthenware vase, was the same as ever. Then she resolutely opened the door, and went in.

On the bed—ah, me! the bitterness of punishment—on the great bed, which had once been her own and George Durnford's, lay, pale and motionless, her only son, stricken even unto death. Alone and uncared for. With dry, parched lips, that sometimes murmured a wail, and sometimes moved to let fall some wild words of delirium, with bright rolling eyes, Philip was waiting for the approach of death. This was written on his forehead in unmistakable signs. He was not even undressed. It appeared as if he had thrown himself upon the bed with his clothes on, and, in the passion of fever, had torn his shirt-collar open, and

tried ineffectually to take off his upper clothing. And though the fever made his brow and his hands burning hot, he shivered occasionally, and his teeth chattered with cold.

Marie took in the whole at a glance. Stepping back to the dining-room, she hastily brought water and gave him to drink, and bathed his burning face. He drank eagerly, and as long as she would let him. Then she opened the windows, for the air was stifling; and then—what hands are so tender as a mother's?—she undressed him, and managed to make him, at least, a little easier. And when all was done—her patient rambling incoherently—she knelt by the bedside and prayed with passionate sobs and tears, that if her son was to die, she might at least be permitted to breathe a few words—only a few—out of the fulness of her heart, into his listening ear. Presently she recovered, and went in search of help. The silence and stillness were inexplicable. At the back of the house, behind the stables, stood the huts for the servants. Thither she went. They were empty. A hundred yards from the house, close by the road, stood the huts which formed the "camp," a little village for some eight hundred folk. It was empty and deserted. The shop was closed—the stables were empty. What could it all mean?

Coming back to the house, she went to the kitchen. This stood by itself, a small stone building. There she found a fire, and crouching by the fire, though it was an afternoon in the height of summer, sat an Indian boy, who only moaned when she touched him. He, too, had fever. She took him up—a light burden enough—and carried him to a room next to Philip's, where she tended him, and laid him in the only bed he had ever slept in in his life. Fortunately, he was not delirious, and from him she learned something of what had happened.

The luckless Philip had taken to drinking all day long, and almost all night. He had become moody, irritable, and capricious, so that the very men who came for the coarse revels that went on there grew tired of him, and left off coming at all. Then, having no companions and no resources, he became every day worse. Once the nearest doctor, an old friend of his father's, rode over to see him, and after his departure Philip improved for a short time. He even sent for

his lawyer, and gave him instructions to sell the estate. No purchaser came for it. The crop was put through the mill and sent up to town; and after it, the unhappy man, growing mad with the dreadful life he lived, resolved to have nothing more to do with the estate, and actually took steps to get rid of his coolies, in which he had almost succeeded. And for two months the canes had been uncared for, the fields almost left to themselves. He said he was going back to England. As they learned afterwards, there was still a large sum of money left, out of Arthur's savings. As for the estate, Philip declared with many oaths that, if no one would buy the place, no one should work in it. And then he reduced his private establishment. Two boys and a cook were all he kept, while for two long months he wandered gloomily about his deserted estate, and at night drank himself into a state of insensibility. And then, one night, he was stricken with fever. The cook and one of the boys ran away in terror; the other would have followed, but that fever seized him too, and held him down.

Marie gathered this partly from the sick boy, and partly from what she heard afterwards. Going into the camp again, she found some bustle and noise. Thank Heaven! there was some one. As she learned afterwards, the whole body of the remaining coolies had struck work that very day, and gone off together—men, women, and children—to complain to the nearest magistrate about getting no wages. Now they were all returned, and, gathered in knots, discussed their grievances. Marie called a sirdar, and despatched him, with a handsome gratuity beforehand, for the nearest doctor. This done, she returned to her patients, the Indians gazing curiously at her.

The boy told her where some tea could be got, and she hastily prepared it for Philip, who lay quietly enough. He was too weak to move, poor fellow; and only murmured incessantly. He drank the tea, however, and then fell asleep, when Marie was able to leave him, and doctor the little Indian, who was almost as ill as his master. Slowly the hours passed. She marked the sun set, as, long ago, she had often watched it, behind the hills in front of the house. She saw the moon rise in the dear old tropical lustre; the cigale shrieked its monotonous note; the watchman began to go his rounds,

and cry "All's well!" the same as he had always done; and, but for the heavy breathing of the poor stricken prodigal—her son—she could almost have thought the four and twenty years since last she sat there a dream. About nine o'clock a deputation waited on her. She knew the rustling of the muslin and the clink of the bangles, and went out on the verandah to receive her visitors. Some half-dozen Indian women stood there. One bore a dish of curry for madame. All wanted to know what they could do for her; all were curious to learn who she was, and why she had come; and all looked on her with a sort of superstitious dread. Their husbands accompanied them as far as the garden hedge, but would go no farther; and now stood, prepared to fly in case of any supernatural manifestations. None occurred, however. Marie asked if two of them would stay with her, and accepted the curry gratefully. It was the first thing she had taken since the early morning coffee, and a long night was before her.

HARMONIOUS DISCORDS;

OR,

THE GRAIN OF WHEAT IN A BUSHEL
OF CHAFF.

An Original English Dramatic Proverb.

BY HARRY ST. MAUR,
OF THE OPERA COMIQUE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LADY VIOLET VENDALEUR, *Young Widow*,
£16,000 a year.

CAPTAIN DU MAURIER, *Officer, Gentleman,*
and poor.

MARIE, *Lady V.'s French Maid.*

SCENE—*Drawing-room at Lady VIOLET
VENDALEUR'S.*

R. *An occasional or work table, with work, scent, &c.—a chair L. of this table—easy chair and stool R. of ditto—C. an ottoman, with antimacassar—L. another occasional table, with flowers, work, books, knicknacks, &c.—easy chair R. of this table—at back, L. gilt and marble console, with glass, flowers, ferns, &c.—doors C.—window, backed with garden cloth, filled with flowers in pots, L.—door leading into Lady V.'s private apartments, R.C.—piano up at back, R.—the furniture blue satin, en suite.*

MARIE *discovered arranging things.*

Marie. Ah! que c'est beau ici. Oh, what

a shame I was not born rich like madame! (*removing dead leaves from console table.*) Madame is beautiful! All a-right; but she carries robes of the first fashion, and is two times millionière. Would she be lo-vely without them? Ah, no, no! We should not have so many gentlemen to call if madame was poor (*laughing*), and how quick madame gives them her congé, with her *hauteur glaciale*. Bah! (*shrugging her shoulders*) madame shall die an old widow. Another present himself yesterday—le Capitaine Du Maurier. Zut! He shall be sent—flanc (*slapping her hands*) like the rest. Ah! the carriage. Madame est rentré.

Enter LADY VENDALEUR, C., with bonnet, &c., as from a drive.

Lady V. (*in bonnet, shawl, &c. going down, R.C.*) Captain Du Maurier was the only caller yesterday, you say, Marie?

Marie (*up L.*) Oui, madame. Monsieur le Capitaine was very grieved mi-ladie was not. He say he shall honour himself to call to-morrow—c'est à dire, to-day—on mi-ladie.

Lady V. C'est bien—allez vous en. (*Exit Marie, C. and L.*) Another of these penniless adventurers. (*Seating herself in easy chair, R.*) Really, the advantages of being an affluent widow—otherwise an independent woman—have their *disadvantages* also, the most conspicuous of which is, apparently, the number of fortune-hunters the prefix "affluent" to the widowhood seems to attract. When I've disposed of this one, he'll be the—the—(*musings*)—I think I'd better not, even to myself, state the exact number. It will be confirming ungenerous notions about man—gentleman-kind. It's as well to remain as long as possible without. Yet this last seems to be going a different (*loosening her bonnet strings*) way to work from the others. I've met the man five or six times out. He hasn't spoken half a dozen words to me. Positively, I've never danced with him once. And yet he does dance, and as very few men can, too. (*Pensively*) I wonder why he's never asked me. (*Thinking.*) Let me see. Has he ever called here before? No. I don't think—(*Suddenly*) Oh yes, he has, of course—with old Lord De Vaux. (*Pettishly*) Bother old Lord De Vaux! If it hadn't been for his chattering, I should never have known that Captain Du Maurier was as poor as a church mouse, and naturally, for

that reason, very much in love with me—or my sixteen thousand a year, rather. He must be a cleverish man, though, for he's never hunted me as the others have; on the contrary, he has always avoided me persistently. (*Impatiently*) Well, I'll astonish him when he does come. He shall have my opinions and ideas of society with a vengeance. I'm getting sick and impatient. (*Angrily*) If hauteur and almost deliberate impertinence can scare him away, he shall have a dose presently. I'm sorry, too. I like the man's looks. He appears to be really a gentleman—a well-informed, clever kind of creature. But there (*rising*), I've never heard him talk. I dare say he's dreadfully stupid. Well, I'll take off my bonnet (*going towards door, R.*), and make myself look nice, and then all the nasty things I say to him will sound all the nastier.

(*Exit door, R.*)

Enter MARIE, C. from L., showing in Captain DU MAURIER.

Marie (announcing). Monsieur le Capitaine Du Maurier. (*Looking round*) Ah! madame is not. She was, not-wiz-standing, here just now. If monsieur shall take the pain to seat himself, I shall tell madame.

Du Maurier (at door). Thanks, mademoiselle, if you please.

Marie. Madame change, no doubt, her chapeau. She shall, no doubt, come directly. (*Exit door, R.*)

Du M. (Going down L., places hat on table, L., takes up book, and seats himself in easy chair, L.) "M'y voici," as mademoiselle would say. (*Pause.*) I wonder does mi-ladie think I've come a-wooing? (*Solemnly*) It will be strange to me if my wooing doesn't bring me woe. Hallo! punning!—that's a clear sign I'm in the blues. (*Turning over leaves of book*) Bah! It's almost without the pale of possibility for any woman as rich as Lady Vendaleur to believe in disinterested affection; and yet I am, I regret for my peace of mind to have to admit, in love with mi-ladie, and not her money. The loss of her money wouldn't break my heart; but (*with feeling*) I'm not so sure the loss of her wouldn't. (*Throwing book on table, L., and leaning on knees.*) For three months have I, without addressing her half a dozen times, notwithstanding, studied her as only a man does or can study the woman he loves. (*Retro-spectively*) Judging by what I have seen, then, and precedent, I have to expect the

assumption on her part of a tone of superiority, accompanied with hauteur and quasi-impertinence. At least (*leaning back*), that's how she has managed to rid herself of her other penniless admirers. Well, I must try and beat her on her own ground. If she snaps, so will I. She shall have tit for tat right through the interview. One thing in my favour is, she ought not to know I'm in love with her; for though I have *spoken* to her, yet I've never conversed with her. So it's only fair to assume that she, taking no interest in me, and therefore laying Dame Gossip but slightly under request as to me and my peculiarities (*turning and looking towards door, R.*), should be at some slight disadvantage at starting. (*Rises quickly as Lady Vendaleur enters R. door. Lady Vendaleur has taken off her bonnet, shawl, &c., has some fancy work in her hand. She scarcely glances at him, bowing coldly, and going to easy chair, R. of table, R.*)

Lady V. (haughtily). I beg your pardon for keeping you waiting, Captain Du Maurier, but I had only just come in, and was removing my outdoor apparel when Marie announced you.

Captain Du M. (bowing, and speaking with polite indifference). May I beg you won't mention it.

Lady V. (after a long pause, sitting). Charming day, is it not?

Du M. No doubt, if you say so. To tell the truth, I haven't taken sufficient notice of the weather to-day to be able to advance a reliable opinion. (*Another pause.*)

Lady V. (pointing to ottoman, c.) Won't you sit down?

Du M. (pointedly). Oh, since you have asked me, I shall be delighted.

(*Goes and sits on ottoman, c.*)
Lady V. (expresses some slight embarrassment). I beg your pardon, sir.

Du M. (quietly). I beg yours, for having given you the trouble of mine twice. I assure you, I would have avoided it if possible.

Lady V. (sceptically). Indeed? Then why couldn't you sit down without being asked? You knew perfectly well I intended to ask you. It was the merest oversight.

Du M. Um! Well—for several reasons. One, I was unable to feel as sure as you imply that you *did* want me to sit down at all. How could I tell that my visit wasn't a bore, and that you wished to convey that (*looking straight at her*) by keeping me standing?

Lady V. (sneeringly). Ladies don't treat gentlemen as if they were tradespeople, sir.

Du M. When they pay their bills, it would be a "spec" for gentlemen if they did.

Lady V. (as before). What do you wish to imply, may I ask?

Du M. If you owe a tradesman money, and pay him, you fulfil your duty amply, and he has no cause for complaint.

Lady V. (looking puzzled). I'm afraid—er—I'm very—stupid, but—er—I really don't see the gist of these figurative speeches. All I know is, I pay my bills.

Du M. (sarcastically). Really? Highly commendable, I'm sure—especially in your case. Delighted, I'm sure. Then why, since you seem to desire a personal illustration, why don't you treat gentlemen as well as you treat your tradesmen?

Lady V. (turning sharply, unable to hide her impatience). How have I failed, pray?

Du M. (expresses facially his satisfaction at having teased her)—(aside) I score one. (*Rising, he crosses R., and stands beside her chair.*) May I venture to remind Lady Vendaleur that she didn't ask me to sit down when she first came into the room?

Lady V. (irritably). Sir, you are ridiculous!

Du M. (strolls, as he speaks, up to console table, L.C., takes up a flower, admires, smells it, finally placing it in his coat). As ridiculous as you are ungenerous.

Lady V. (very haughtily). Pray, did you come here to catechize?

Du M. (quietly and coolly). Well, no—not absolutely. But—but if you like, I will!

Lady V. (sarcastically). Oh, do—pray do! Go on (*leaning back in her chair*), doubtless it will be entertaining.

Du M. Then you must promise to answer my questions?

Lady V. Put some.

Du M. (as he speaks, strolls down and seats himself on R. side of c. ottoman). You are enviably rich?

Lady V. (sarcastically). Presumably; for many gentlemen seem to have coveted my riches.

Du M. Conveying such covetousness by offers of marriage?

Lady V. (bitterly). Only because they can't legally get at my means without.

Du M. Um! In consequence, your estimate of gentlemen is not of a very high order.

Lady V. (indignantly and bitterly). Tout

au contraire. Once or twice every month, some—gentleman swears to me the existence of the noblest and purest passion human nature is capable of—love—and for me, when he merely wants my money. Content, sir, to perjure himself in order to procure ignoble affluence, and become a rich woman's pensioner. Unfortunately, I happen to have been educated, and duly appreciate what is good, pure, and honourable. With so many examples to the contrary, you will scarcely be surprised if I consider the term "gentleman," as generally applied, a hollow mockery—(*movement of indignation on Du M.'s part, quickly repressed*)—and permanent disgrace to society at large. (*Rising and crossing to L. table, as if in search of something connected with her work*).

Du M. (Pauses a moment, evidently admitting the truth of the above). Oh! There's where your want of generosity, not to say worldly ignorance, is apparent.

Lady V. Indeed, and how? You must admit I have judged these creatures fairly; their own actions have stamped them.

Du M. (half-turning towards her). Still you are ungenerous. Having always been swindled with electro-plate in lieu of silver, you refuse to credit the existence of the silver altogether.

Lady V. (sneeringly). Sir, the electro-plate always wanted gilding; and so, I believe, would the silver, for it is a baser metal than gold.

Du M. (quickly, wholly turning to her). Pardon me—in its way, silver is the equal of gold. It's scarcely less beautiful, infinitely more useful. So a gentleman—in other words an honourable man—is more useful in the world than a woman, who is admissibly the most delicately beautiful of created beings. (*Rising, and going to her, and speaking with energy, carried away by his feelings*). Believe me, Lady Vendaleur, a man has but one leading ambition, the absolute possession of a true woman's heart, and—(*checking himself as she looks up at him, surprised by his vehemence*)—er—"Birds of a feather," you know, "flock together." Your riches are the natural prey of the so-called "gentlemen" you have alluded to. Had you been wise, you would have expected, understood this, and not have insulted the whole feathered tribe by classing them amongst the carnivora.

Lady V. (is struck by this speech, but is careful to prevent him from perceiving this). In-

geniously put, sir; but, unfortunately, Birmingham goods—not to lose sight of your own brilliant simile—are unmistakable.

Du M. (in a mock tone of deep pity). My dear Lady Vendaleur, I don't expect impossibilities. You know you are completely crushed—*(she turns quickly)*—but that you or any other lady should acknowledge herself beaten would be almost as great an impossibility as—er—a dividend-paying limited liability company, or a good security at seven per cent. *(crosses R., laughing heartily).*

Lady V. I am not beaten yet, sir; and with regard to companies and securities, don't talk about what you don't understand.

Du M. Ah! I see. *(Sits R. of R. table, and plays with Lady Vendaleur's work, through this and the next speech.)* You've heard I'm poor, and therefore you think I am ignorant of the uses to which money may be placed? Well, I venture to say I know as much about the investment of money as you do of—well—of—mangling, clear starching, or plain cooking, say.

Lady V. (quietly). I understand all three perfectly.

Du M. Indeed! Permit me to compliment you, my dear Lady Vendaleur, on attainments rare indeed amongst your super-ornamental sex.

Lady V. (haughtily). Blame yourself, sir. Most men prefer a gawky girl who can murder "The Carnival of Venice" on a bad piano, and simper in questionable French, to one who can make and eat dumplings.

Du M. (still playing with work). I confess, with shame and ignominy, my inability to appreciate dumplings; but let me hasten to retrieve myself by adding, I would rather eat—well, a whole one, the larger component part of which should be suet, than I would hear the "Carnaval" played by the lady you have so graphically described.

Lady V. I wish I could put you to the test—especially if I had the making of the dumpling.

Du M. (laughing heartily). And imbued, I dare swear, with the spirit of a true woman's vengeance, you'd make it very hard and very large, wouldn't you? *(She laughs significantly.)* But revenons à nos moutons. You will admit yourself wrong in judging all men by the inferior specimens you have alluded to? Every clergyman's object in going into the Church is not a bishop's fat revenue, remember.

Lady V. (tantalizingly). I'll admit nothing whatever, Captain Du Maurier.

Du M. Umph! You are almost as wise as a Cabinet Minister; though perhaps that's not saying much in certain instances. Still, I don't despair. *(Throwing work, &c., he has been playing with down, he rises, delivering the next speech kneeling on the ottoman at back, somewhat as if he was preaching to her.)* I call to mind what Fothergill says of faith and opinion. "Faith overcomes the world: opinion is overcome by the world. Your faith in men—" *(“Pshaw!” and incredulous smile, Lady V.)*—will in time conquer your prejudice, in proportion as your knowledge of the world helps to dissipate your evil opinion. You are in error; which is, in point of fact, an effect of the imagination, accounted for by your feminine unwillingness to limit conviction by reason and judgment.

Lady V. (rising). I beg your pardon, Captain Du Maurier, but I think I've had enough of preaching and catechism. Suppose we change the subject? *(Going C.)*

Du M. (getting off ottoman, and stopping her, c.). Willingly. Er—may I be personal?

Lady V. (amused.) Well, a very little, if you are entertaining withal.

Du M. (Pause. He gazes fixedly at her for a second or two; then) You are not very plain, are you?

Lady V. (starts, expresses the blindest astonishment; is inclined to resent this as an impertinence at first, but cannot ultimately help being amused at the oddity of the question). Well, really! Do you call that a little personal? I really don't know. I hope not *(indifferently).*

Du M. (quietly). Pardon me, you do know, perfectly well.

Lady V. (turning quickly). Oh! I can repeat the lies men have told me about myself, if that will do?

Du M. No, no! Give me your own candid opinion, if you don't mind. There's no occasion to be coquettish in the matter.

Lady V. (fencing). Coquettish? Coquette—ah, don't you men glory in coquettes?

Du M. (removing a glove). That's a wandering from the subject, but I'll answer it so far as I am individually and personally concerned. *I pity them.* Are you one? If so, I'll pity you; and if you ever jilted any one, and will tell me who, I'll congratulate them.

Lady V. Congratulate them! *(Sitting C. of C. ottoman.)* And why, may I ask? I should

have thought—not being in the profession myself, you will be surprised to hear—that it was the flirts' victims who deserved the pity, and not the flirts.

Du M. No, the pity should be reserved for the flirt's husband, if she's lucky enough to catch one. (*Laughing.*) You see, Lady Vendaleur, I am of the same opinion as somebody clever, who once said that "A flirt was a rose, from whom every lover plucked a leaf—the thorn remained for her future." (*Crosses L. to L. table, and remains standing there, with his back to the audience, playing with his hat, which it will be remembered he had placed on this table.*)

Lady V. (*smiling.*) More ingenuity.

Du M. But you haven't answered my question. Are you (*looking over his shoulder*) ugly?

Lady V. (*shortly.*) No.

Du M. What are you, then?

Lady V. (*rising, drawing herself up to her full height, and speaking with the most repellent hauteur.*) Lady Vendaleur!

Du M. (*unabashed.*) By name (*slightly bowing*), but what by nature?

Lady V. If you are interested in the matter, find out my nature for yourself.

(*Again sits.*)

Du M. (*turning to the audience, with a meaning smile on his face.*) I fancy I am already sufficiently well informed on that subject.

Lady V. Indeed! (*sarcastically.*) I feel honoured. But I venture to say you are quite wrong. In the first place, you've had no opportunity of studying me—(*Du M. expresses in action, "Haven't I though!"*)—and further, if you had, I don't wear my character "on my sleeve."

Du M. (*Pause.*) Lady Vendaleur (*going and sitting beside her on the ottoman, c.*), I will honestly tell you what I think—on one condition.

Lady V. And that is? (*turning to him.*)

Du M. If I am right, if I draw your character truly, will you own to it?

Lady V. (*interested, after a pause.*) Well, I think I will.

Du M. You are a handsome, elegant, and aristocratic-looking woman (*she nods and smiles satirically, as much as to say, "The same old story!"*); and—you know it! (*The smile on Lady V.'s face is suddenly changed to blank surprise: she haughtily turns from him.*) But you don't set undue value on your appearance; for although, you know,

you are fortunate in the possession of beauty, you are in no way instrumental in its existence. (*Touching her dress.*) I cannot, however, say you are not extravagantly careful in its adornment. (*She sweeps her dress from him.*) You are better educated than the majority of your sex, and of this you are deservedly proud. (*She betrays surprise and impatience at the accuracy of his information.*) You are disappointed in what you've seen of men since your entrée into society, which may be said to have dated from a year or two after your widowhood. For, having exercised no choice in the selection of your first husband, and owing, further, to the disparagement in age between you, up to then society was a dead letter to you. (*Earnestly.*) You have in you sentiments and feelings which are an honour to any woman worthy the name. (*She is here keenly attentive, her face expressing surprise and pleasure at his intuitively correct estimate of her character.*) You were prepared to love and honour some man—if chance threw in your way one whose tastes, habits, and disposition were in accordance with your own. You can only feel *loathing* and *contempt* for those men you have hitherto met; but in your heart of hearts you feel that man is your superior, and worthy of your love—pure and exceptional as it is. (*Pause.*) Is this not so? (*In a tone of indifference.*)

Lady V. (*Lady Violet, feeling that she cannot in truth deny the verisimilitude of the portrait he has just drawn, remains silent a moment; she then glances at him with an expression of pleasure and tenderness—then bursts into a hearty laugh.*) Captain Du Maurier, you are in love with me!

Du M. (*expresses blank astonishment, Lady V. rises, still laughing, and crosses, L.* *Du M. rises, tries to say something; failing in consequence of her continued laughter, he finally takes stage, R., and blurts out*) Lady Vendaleur, you—er—flatter yourself.

Lady V. Oh, no, I don't—"experientia docet." Your photograph (*laughing meaningly*) of me has evidently been taken on a clear day, for I should recognize it again.

Du M. (*pleased.*) Knowledge of art, then, has nothing to do with it?

Lady V. Indeed, yes. You are a proficient. That's what makes me say you are in love with me. Sir, true artists are always inspired. So are you—with love. (*Lady V. is herself now, and no longer haughty and overbearing as at the opening of the scene. This*

change must be carefully attended to. She is herself now unconsciously, and because Captain Du M., in whom she has always been interested, has now inspired her with some return of the sentiment he feels, in consequence of the unusual lead he has taken in and tone he has given to the conversation, and his evident study for some time past of her character, and his flattering but nevertheless just estimate thereof.)

Du M. (*crossing, c.*) Is love an inspiration, then?

Lady V. (*sadly.*) It used to be, it ought to be; indeed, I think it is, even in these degenerate days, when fathers sell their daughters—(*aside*) as I was sold—and feeling and modesty are banished in favour of pearl-powder, rouge, undress, and girl-of-the-periodism.

Du M. So you object to modern fashions, Lady Vendaleur?

Lady V. (*mock heroically*). Sir, a lady considers a lie beneath her. If I pad, wear false hair, and paint my face, I consider I act a lie!—(*pause, and conclude in a comedy tone, laughing*)—to say nothing of the extreme difficulty of rouging so exactly alike every day as to escape detection. (*She crosses, c.*)

Du M. (*crossing, L.*) But what will you do when you grow old?

Lady V. (*mock pathetically*). "Teach the orphan boy to sew."

Du M. Eh?

Lady V. "The orphan girl to—something—" you know—Tennyson.

Du M. (*with counterfeited alarm.*) What! not go in for woman's rights and get elected for an education board?

Lady V. No, sir, nothing of the kind. If I desert my natural sphere, I shall upset the present Government, and create another; make myself head of affairs; have a very large salary, so that when I'm tired or turned out—same thing, you know—I could have plenty to retire upon. That's the approved style of things nowadays, isn't it? (*Sits in R. easy chair.*)

Du M. (*amused, strolling up to ottoman*). Yes—oh, yes. You'll make a splendid Prime Minister. I should advise you, though, to write a three-volume novel while in office, if you can find time.

Lady V. Ah, to be sure! Follow Conservative precedent—produce a sensation with a sensation! I could get a private secretary to do all the work, couldn't I?

Du M. Just so (*lolling on back of ottoman*). Nothing like cheap advertising, you know.

Lady V. Did you ever write a novel?

Du M. No.

Lady V. Why? Couldn't you?

Du M. Well—yes. I think I might possibly equal some of the literary productions of the present day.

Lady V. Not difficult, I should think. Hero, titled cad. Heroine, demi-monde. Descriptive power to be exercised on Richmond dinners and races; coin a few uncouth adjectives, with which qualify slang nouns; get a new kind of type invented to set it up in; and there you are!

Du M. Admirable! Really, Lady Vendaleur, you are the happy possessor of satirical powers which should not be permitted to lie fallow. Pray make an early début among "our titled lady novelists."

Lady V. Thank you, I have no ambition. Besides, I have a horror of appearing ridiculous; for women who engage in pursuits they are not qualified for are ridiculous. Though, mind you, no matter how absurd a thing is, if it is new it's sure to please. (*Sighing.*) I believe a "new and original" comedy would be appreciated.

Du M. Excuse me, translations from the French, or paste pot and scissors, are the straight tips.

Lady V. (*sternly*). Captain Du Maurier, can't you make love without talking slang?

Du M. (*startled*). Make love! (*Standing up.*) Will you permit me, very mildly, to suggest that I am not making love?

Lady V. (*laughing at him over her shoulder*). Yes, you are—you are making love to me all this time. You're confirming the truth of my assertion that anything fresh, no matter how absurd, is appreciable. The way you are making love to me is ridiculous in the extreme; but it's fresh, so I dislike it less than if it was conventional.

Du M. (*through this speech stands with a look of the most helpless amazement on his face*). Now, Lady Vendaleur (*speaking with great energy, and crossing to R. side of R. table*), do me the justice to admit that I haven't spoken one word of love to you since I have been in your drawing-room. Now, have I?

Lady V. (*laughing merrily*). No, but you've looked heaps—(*the Captain is disconcerted*)—to say nothing of your erratic promenades, the shamefully impertinent way you've been talking to me, and finding out all about me; messing my work about, and—but if you had, my lawyer would have called.

Du M. (leaning on table). Your lawyer? I don't understand.

Lady V. (merrily). Oh, my lawyer always calls when I want to get rid of my admirers. Marie understands that. You see most of them are in debt, and it frightens them: the word lawyer is quite sufficient to induce them to make a precipitate exit.

Du M. (drawing himself up to his full height, and speaking with the extreme bitterness of a man smarting under the sting of a deliberate insult). A thousand thanks, madam, I understand the innuendo only too well. You do me the honour to suggest that I am in love with your money, and—*(takes one step R., turning his back to her to hide his anger and indignation).*

Lady V. (starts up, betraying the utmost concern at having wounded his feelings). Indeed—indeed I—*(she stops, fearing to say too much: her face tells the audience plainly she loves him. She turns, and goes slowly to C., her head bowed on her breast to hide her emotion)*—I—I—did not say so.

Du M. (bitterly). No, truly—not in so many words; but you implied it.

Lady V. (in a very low voice). Indeed, but I never meant to. It's use, I suppose—a kind of second nature—to believe all men worship my horrid guineas.

Du M. (slowly, turning and going to her). Lady Vendaleur, you pay yourself a very poor compliment. Don't you think you are worth loving for yourself alone?

Lady V. (very sadly). I used to think and hope so—once *(suppressing a sob)*. I'm afraid I don't now. *(Turning to him with affected gaiety, but traces of her emotion still evident.)* Oh, Captain Du Maurier, don't make me an offer, please—pray don't! I do like you, very much, and would give a great deal to include you among my friends. *(A slight movement of embarrassment betrays that she would not mind a nearer relationship.)* If you make me an offer I shall—I shall think of my horrid guineas again, and hate and despise you with the rest. *(She is turning from him; he stops her, taking her hand.)*

Du M. (earnestly). Violet Vendaleur, listen to me for one moment. *(She is a little down, he up, though but slightly out of a line, so that while his face is to the audience, hers is equally visible.)* My father was one of the truest gentlemen that ever lived. *(Speaking slowly.)* He once told me that the guiding principle of his life had been honour, and

prayed me scrupulously to guard a spotless reputation; for, though it was *all* he had to leave me, the inheritance was priceless. I solemnly swear to you that I never have, so far as I know, done aught that may not become a man, and *(drawing himself up to his full height)* a gentleman. *(Pause: speaking with the deepest emotion, his voice thrilling and low, his hands which now leave go of Lady V.'s, trembling slightly. Lady V. assists the effect of this speech by allowing the various emotions his words create to be plainly visible.)* I do love you, and you only, with my whole heart and soul; and I only ask for time and opportunity to prove this. *(She moves a step away from him, that he may not see the joy the avowal causes her.)* Remember—*(with a slight accent of despair, thinking this movement of hers significant of his rejection)*—the deep, earnest, and steadfast love of a true man is worth sixteen times sixteen thousand a year; and if I'm not a good man, I've tried to be one, and I am—an honourable man.

Lady V. (turning with emprossement, offering both her hands, which he takes). Forgive me. I do think you are a man, and not *(scornfully)*—a creature—a thing! I will try—*(confusedly)*—I'm not sure that I haven't for months past loved—

Du M. Ah! Vi—

Lady V. (quickly and gaily, to cover her embarrassment). But don't you think I ought to be very angry with you? All this time, though you admit you're desperately in love with me, you have been inundating me with—well, I must be slangy—chaff.

Du M. Ah! but there was “a grain of wheat in the bushel of chaff”—*my love for you!*

Lady V. (with deep feeling). Which I found *(placing one hand on his R. shoulder)*; and as a grain of wheat when sown grows, ripens, and multiplies, so shall my true woman's love grow and ripen, till the harvest of my heart is full, and then it shall be *all*—*all* *(placing herself in his arms)* yours.

Curtain quick on picture.

DOCTOR MIDDLETON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “A DESPERATE CHARACTER.”

CHAPTER II.

MY aunt Thorowgood, with whom I first lodged on my arrival in Dublin, was a most estimable lady.

She must have been many years younger than my mother, whose sister she was; for she had a family of little children at the time of which I write—five of them, and another was born whilst I was in the house.

These juvenile cousins were one of the bugbears of my existence.

I never liked children—that is, until I had some of my own, which then I had not; and even now I cannot get up a spurious enthusiasm, as some do, for other people's offspring—although the exigencies of my business require me occasionally to make the attempt, which invariably ends in a disgraceful failure; and the necessity of feigning an interest I do not feel is the most disagreeable condition of my artificial life.

My uncle, too, worthy soul, was a most excellent fellow. He had but one fault of which I was aware—namely, an inordinate and untimely passion for music. A friend of mine once declared him to be “*un fanatico per la musica*,” which, I believe, is Italian for “music mad;” and so the poor dear man most undoubtedly was.

Now, when a fellow is studying an abstruse science, and is trying his best to commit to memory a number of barbarous words, of savage length, to which he as yet attaches no particular meaning—such as *sacroiliacsynchondrosis*, for instance—it is not conducive to his success to listen at the same time to a continual rhythmical “thump, thump, thump!” overhead, accompanied by the droning of an harmonium; more especially when, in the room beside him, five urchins are performing a concert with various old watering-pots for musical instruments, and yelling at the top of their shrill voices.

Is it to be wondered at that, with such surroundings, I should have at length felt compelled to seek a home elsewhere, or that I caused an advertisement to be inserted in one of the local papers, to the following effect?—

“Apartments wanted, in a quiet, respectable family, by a gentleman studying for one of the learned professions. Children and music—particularly harmoniums—objected to.—Address, &c., &c.”

My aunt saw the advertisement, and found me out at once.

I did not deny the authorship, so we parted—on friendly terms, certainly, but

not without a certain amount of soreness on either side, which was some time in wearing off.

Yet, I could not see that I was in any way to blame.

I had a multitude of replies to my advertisement—I forget how many now; but one and all assured me of quietness and respectability.

I called at several of the addresses given, and at one house, when the door was opened, I caught sight of three dishevelled urchins in grimy pinafores.

“I understood,” I said, addressing the mother, who had come forward, “that you had no children, madam.”

“No one ever objected to mine,” she replied.

“I do; and as I explicitly stated as much in my advertisement, I cannot see why you should have given me the unnecessary trouble of calling here.”

“You must be a most unnatural person,” she exclaimed, looking at me with flashing eyes, as she folded the most dishevelled and grimest of her offspring to her maternal bosom.

I turned and fled.

At length I came to an anchor.

A venerable-looking, elderly gentleman, deeply engaged in writing during the whole of my visit; his sister, an aged maiden, who kept nodding her head affirmatively at every word I said—a proceeding which I took for exaggerated politeness, but afterwards found out was the effect of palsy; and a decrepit brother, of weak intellect, composed the whole family.

I was certain to be quiet there.

“References? Certainly. My uncle, Mr. Thorowgood.”

“Quite sufficient.”

I felt ashamed of asking them for a reference, but eventually plucked up courage, and did so.

The old gentleman who had been writing bristled up at once, like a porcupine.

“I have been on the Rolls forty years, and have lived in this house sixteen. Our old servant, who opened the door for you, has lived with us nearly all her life. What more do you require?”

“I——”

“One moment. It shall never be said that Richard Coster was afraid to give a reference. I refer you, sir, to my friend, Mr. Fergus O'Donahoo, first cousin to the

member for Clare. That will suffice, I trust."

I ought to have known better; but I liked the situation and the apartments, and made an apology, which was perfectly unnecessary and haughtily accepted, and agreed to the terms, paying the first month's rent in advance.

I was very cosy and comfortable there for a while, and particularly quiet, and made considerable progress with my studies.

After a week or two, however, I remarked that my landlord never went out until after dark, and that any one coming to the house was carefully reconnoitred through the window before the door was opened.

I thought it strange.

When I had been about three weeks in the house, the old lady intercepted me on the stairs one day, as I was on my way to attend a lecture.

"How do you do, Mr. Cochrane?"

"Quite well, Miss Coster—how are you?"

"I am never well, as you may suppose; but that is of no consequence, I am perfectly resigned."

"Dear me!"

"Ah, yes; but I hope you find yourself quite comfortable here?"

"Quite so, thank you," I replied.

"I am glad of that, for we were afraid you might be dull."

"Well, it is a little dull at times, Miss Coster, I must admit; but I am not here to amuse myself."

"What a studious young man you are, to be sure; but you ought to know that it is not good for your health to be always reading."

"It does me no harm."

"Still, you ought to have a little society now and then."

"So I shall, I dare say, by and by."

"Why could you not come down and spend an hour or two with us in the parlour of an evening?"

"Thank you, Miss Coster, you are very kind, but—"

"My brother is so fond of a quiet rubber, and, you know, it is very stupid playing with 'dummy.'"

"As I knew not what reply to make, I said 'Indeed?'"

"Yes, very. You play whist, of course?"

"No, Miss Coster, I do not."

"Loo?"

"No game of cards whatever."

"You perfectly astonish me."

"Do I?"

"You do, indeed. I always heard you colonial gentlemen were so fond of cards, and all that sort of thing."

"You have been wrongly informed, Miss Coster."

"Really, now—well to be sure! Do you play bagatelle or billiards?"

"Neither."

"How very odd!"

"My father is a clergyman, Miss Coster, and holds all games of chance in utter abhorrence; and I quite agree with him in every respect."

"What a very good young man you must be, to be sure!"

This was said sneeringly, and being interpreted meant, "What a precious fool you are!" So I bowed, and moved to pass downstairs.

"You seem to be in a great hurry, Mr. Cochrane."

"I am, Miss Coster. Professor Porter lectures to-day, and I shall be late. Excuse me. Good morning."

The old lady saw it was no use trying to detain me any longer, and, bowing stiffly, allowed me to pass.

The next day, as I was finishing my dinner, I heard a timid knock at the door, and called out, "Come in."

The decrepit brother made his appearance.

"If you please, Mr. Cochrane, my brother presents his compliments, and would it be convenient to let him have the next month's rent, as he has a small amount to make up, and was disappointed in getting some money he expected?"

The old fellow had learned his lesson well; but, as I had been barely three weeks in the house, I declined acceding to his request.

There was a good deal of loud talking downstairs afterwards; but I took no notice.

In the evening the old servant, after bringing up my tea, instead of immediately retiring, as was her usual custom, lingered with her hands on the door, looking so evidently full of information, that I said—

"Well, Mary, what is it?"

"If you please, sir," she replied, "if you have any valuables, or things you care about, I'd remove them."

"Would you?"

"Yes, sir, I would ; and, if I might make so bold, I'd advise you to do the same."

"Why so, Mary?"

"Because the bailiffs will be in here, from one minute to the other: they've been watching the house ever since the day after you come."

"You don't say so!"

"Ah, but I do, sir; and as you've been very kind to me, I thought it was my duty to tell you."

"Thank you, Mary."

"Yes, sir; they're a bad lot downstairs. They owe me three years' wages, and I can't get a penny piece from them; and they half starve me, and won't let me have any fire in the kitchen."

"Really."

"Yes, sir, it's a fact I'm telling you—they won't, indeed."

"Very hard upon you, Mary."

"You may say that, sir—it is, indeed. And it's me was glad, sir, when you refused the old one to play cards. Sure, I heard her colloquing with you on the stairs; but you were too cute for her, not like the simple gentleman that was here before you came. They cheated him out of ever so many pounds with them same cards."

I had heard more than enough, and did not care to encourage the old woman's garrulity; so I replied—

"Thank you, Mary, I am much obliged to you. I'll ring when I want you to clear away."

"Thank you, sir. I thought it was my duty to warn you; for you're a nice, kind gentleman."

"Pooh, pooh, Mary—that will do."

I had given her an odd shilling once in a way since I had been in the house, and always spoke to her civilly, which I suppose the old girl appreciated, as people do favours to which they have not been accustomed.

When she had left the room, I began to think it would be rather awkward if I were to lose my books and clothes; for my income was limited, and not at all calculated to defray more than my necessary expenses.

I felt rather vexed, too, at having so soon to leave a place that suited me in every respect, save the character of the persons who owned it.

It was certainly very tiresome. Would not my aunt Thorowgood chuckle when she heard of it!

I was bound to give a month's notice, or pay a month's rent.

Next morning I paid a visit to my uncle at his office, and explained matters to him.

"You had better leave the place at once, Tom," he said; "but you will have to pay them a month's rent. I fancy you had better write a note to Coster, and tell him what you propose to do."

"Thank you, uncle, I will."

Accordingly, on returning to my lodgings, I wrote to my landlord, enclosing a month's rent for the rooms I occupied, and announcing my intention of removing from them forthwith.

I expected to find him very angry, and looked for a disturbance.

But, no; on the contrary, he sent me a civil reply, acknowledging the receipt of the money, and requesting to know what I intended doing with my rooms, as I had taken them for a year. Did I intend to lock them up? or would I entrust the keys with his sister?

I don't know whether I was more amused or vexed by the old fellow's impudence; but thought, "The less writing that passes between us, my friend, the better."

I rang the bell for Mary.

"My compliments to Mr. Coster, and say I wish to speak to him for a few minutes; will he have the kindness to step up?"

Mary came back almost directly, saying—

"If you please, sir, Mr. Coster's compliments, and he is too busy to come up. If you have anything to say to him, will you write?"

"No, Mary—I'll go down."

"Pray, sir," began the old woman, "be careful; he is a terrible man, is master, when he's roused."

"Nonsense, Mary! You don't suppose I am going to quarrel with him?"

"Oh, sir, I hope not; for he'd have the law of you directly, that he would; and, sure, it's nothing else he's looking for."

"Well, well, you needn't be afraid, Mary. I shall take care not to give him any opportunity."

Upon entering the parlour, I found the sister and the decrepit brother playing, or pretending to play, backgammon; whilst Mr. Coster was, as usual, seated at his desk, writing away in a desperate hurry.

"Good morning," I said, addressing myself to the three occupants of the room, collectively.

"Good morning," from all three.

"I wished to speak to you for a moment, Mr. Coster, respecting the note you have sent me by your servant just now."

No answer.

"Your note, Mr. Coster?"

"Eh?"—looking up with an abstracted air from the paper upon which he had been pretending to write; for I could see it was blank. "Did you speak to me, sir?"

"Yes," I replied, "I did, in reference to this note. 'I never engaged to take your apartments for a year.'"

"You did; and I can prove it."

"Pardon me, I never did, and you cannot prove it. I intend moving out to-morrow."

"I shall not permit you to take anything out of the house."

"No?"

"Most decidedly, no. I have the law on my side, and mean to stick to my rights."

"Very well," I replied, rather taken aback by his confident tone—"very well, Mr. Coster; we shall see."

"So we shall, sir—so we shall." And he recommenced his writing with increased activity.

"Good morning," I rather unnecessarily remarked, as I turned to leave the room.

No answer. The players were too much engrossed by their game, and the attorney too deeply engaged with the "brief" he was writing, to reply.

I found the old servant waiting for me in my sitting-room.

"The Lord be praised, sir! You've come back alive out of the den."

"Don't be a fool!" I answered, very snappishly; for I had been more irritated by the reception I had met with downstairs than I would have cared at the time to admit. "Don't be a fool, old woman! What on earth do you suppose they could do to me?"

"The Lord knows, sir, I don't! But, anyhow, they're a bad lot."

"At any rate, they are your master and mistress; and it is not at all becoming on your part to abuse them to a stranger."

"True for you, sir, and I'm sure I beg your pardon."

"Very well, Mary, that will do."

"If I might make so bold, sir, what are you going to do now?"

"I shall leave here to-morrow."

"Well, well; I only hope you'll be able

to get your things out safe, sir. Sure, I heard him say he wouldn't let you take them away."

"Pooh, nonsense! I sha'n't dine at home to-day, Mary. That will do. You may go."

The old woman seemed very anxious to continue talking; but I told her, peremptorily, to leave the room, which she at last very reluctantly did.

I concluded I had better apply to my uncle, and hear what he had to say.

It was rather a bitter pill to swallow, this applying to my relative; but as it had to be done, the sooner it was disposed of the better.

My uncle was all suavity. I verily believe had he been commissioned to tell a man that sentence of death had been passed upon him, he would have done it with so much gentleness and tact that the news to the condemned would have sounded rather pleasantly than otherwise.

He heard me to the end of my story without a helping word, and seemed to enjoy my stuttering and stammering immensely.

When I had finished, he smiled blandly; brushed up his hair with the two first fingers of his left hand, stuck his pen behind his right ear, and in the most mellifluous tone, inquired—

"Well?"

"Well," said I, "what would you advise me to do, uncle?"

"Get out of the place as quickly as you can, Tom."

"He said he would not allow me to take away my things."

"What sort of a man is he?"

"In what respect do you mean?"

"Is he a big fellow?"

"No, not so very big, uncle. But why do you ask?"

"My dear boy, you ought to be able to eat any fellow of your size, with those muscles of yours."

"Oh, as to the eating, I don't know, uncle; but I am not in the least afraid of a personal encounter with him, if that is what you mean—although I should not seek for one with a man of his years."

"Quite right, Tom—quite right, my boy. I regret I cannot advise you further in the matter. Get out of the place as quickly as you can."

"But where am I to go to?"

"Ah, my dear boy, that is your own

look-out; for the proverb, 'Be off with the old love before you are on with the new,' does not hold in the matter of lodgings, where it is of the utmost importance to engage fresh ones before you quit the old, unless you choose to run the risk of passing a night or two in the street."

"Couldn't you—"

"Take you back again, you were about to say, Tom," exclaimed my uncle, interrupting me. "No, my boy, that is out of the question. I am fully aware how vitally important perfect quiet is in the case of a student; and where pianos and children, not to mention harmoniums, exist, it is unattainable. Therefore, for your own sake, dear Tom, I cannot give my consent to a renewal of the arrangement which, in deference to the wishes of your sainted mother, and at much personal inconvenience, I was induced to tolerate for a time."

I stood speechless. My poor mother's wishes, I thought, had as much weight as ever; but I knew it would be useless to argue with my uncle, who continued—

"I know—or, at least, I fancy—I can get you what you are in want of, Tom."

"Thank you, uncle."

"Wait a minute, my boy. My friend, Mr. Cornell, one of the Bank cashiers, has excellent board and lodging, he tells me, somewhere in the suburbs; where, I have no doubt, you would meet with the accommodation you require. Shall I give you a note to him? He can give you the address, which I forget; and you can then go out, and judge for yourself."

"Thank you, uncle; that will do nicely, I dare say."

"Very well."

He wrote a short note to his friend; and telling me where to find him in the Bank, smilingly wished me "Good morning," and plunged again into his correspondence, a perusal of which my entrance had interrupted.

Mr. Cornell was "charmed to make my acquaintance."

"There is yet a vacancy," he said, "in our establishment—at least, there was this morning, when I left."

"It is your house, then, Mr. Cornell?"

"Dear me, no. I say 'our,' because I have lived there some time, and feel a—I may say, paternal—interest in the proprietresses, two maiden ladies of very agreeable manners. You will be quite comfortable

there, I feel assured. Mention my name. Good morning."

"Good morning, Mr. Cornell. I hope we shall meet at dinner."

The old gentleman nodded his head; he could not spare time for further conversation.

It was one of the pleasantest suburbs around Dublin; not too far from town, and with plenty of 'bus and car accommodation on rainy days.

It was a fine-looking house, one of a row or terrace.

I ran up the stone steps briskly; for I liked the appearance of the place, and was anxious to get settled. Moreover, I was losing time, and had missed two lectures.

A very untidy servant opened the door, in reply to my second summons.

"Is your mistress within?"

I had omitted to ask the lady's name.

"She is, then."

"Can I see her?"

"Maybe you can."

"Will you tell her a gentleman wishes to speak to her?"

"I will that."

So speaking the woman walked off, leaving me standing at the door.

Presently she returned.

"You can come in if you like."

"Thank you," said I, and followed into the hall, which was narrow and covered with rather shabby oilcloth, which, as well as the stair-carpet, had evidently seen better days.

The corners, I observed, were full of fluff, and, on the whole, the aspect of the place was not promising.

The untidy domestic scuttled up the stairs before me, dropping an old slipper, which would have been invaluable to the friends of any newly married pair, on the way, and, without waiting to pick up her property, bounced into the front drawing-room without knocking at the door.

"The gentleman, ma'am, to spake with you."

"Show him in, Ann."

But I was left to walk in by myself, which I did, with much misgiving.

A dreary-looking room enough, very poorly furnished.

A sofa, horsehair covered, large mahogany table, some dozen chairs of the same wood, also provided with horsehair seats, wofully out at the corners; a few cheap prints, in

mock maple frames; two small tables, crochet-covered, one in each window; and a confused heap of foreign shells on the chimneypiece, were the entire contents of the room.

The weather was cold; a small fire struggled for existence in the dusty grate, which was half blocked up with bricks; and at either side of the fireplace sat a lady whom her most partial friend could no longer have called young.

The elder-looking of the two—she was in reality the younger—wore a sort of composition between a cap and a chenille hairnet on her head; the other dressed her hair in attenuated ringlets. Both were habited in gray linsey dresses, which, like the owners, might possibly have seen better days; and their costume was unrelieved by the smallest particle of white, whether cuff or collar.

The elder had been engaged in casting up accounts in a small, red-covered book; the other had apparently been reading a volume of the "Parlour Library," which lay, turned face downwards, on her lap.

Neither rose as I entered.

"Mr. Cornell—" I began.

The lady with the ringlets stood up.

"Mr. Cornell is not at home. He does not come in before six.

"Pardon me—I am aware of that; but Mr. Cornell desired me to mention his name. I am looking for lodgings, and believe you have a vacancy?"

"Yes, sir, certainly."

"I wish to take the apartment."

"Be seated, pray," said the lady, waving her hand to a chair, and resuming her own seat as she spoke. "It is a pleasant, airy room—the top back—and has a magnificent view from the window."

"The terms, madam?"

"Forty pounds a year."

"Dear me!" I exclaimed, rising. "I am afraid that is too high for me."

"We cannot possibly take less," replied the lady; "in fact, it scarcely pays at that."

"In that case, madam, I am sorry to have troubled you. I must look elsewhere."

"I am sure," said the lady with the novel, speaking for the first time, "you will not get board and lodging cheaper anywhere."

"You surely do not mean that you will board as well as lodge me for forty pounds a year?" I exclaimed, in much surprise; for I had paid my aunt sixty, and I had given Mr. Coster at the rate of five and thirty for

his two rooms alone, and it took me quite a pound a week to board myself.

"Such are our terms, sir."

"Of course, madam, you know your own business best," I observed; "but I cannot see how it can possibly pay you."

"You see," replied the lady with the curls, "it is the number that pays. Possibly we could not do it for one; but where there are a number it is different. And, besides, many gentlemen object to give more."

"They must know very little about house-keeping, madam, or they would be more reasonable."

"I wish we could meet with a few more gentlemen of your opinion, sir," said the lady of the chenille net.

I bowed.

"When will it be convenient for me to come in, madam?"

"Whenever you please, sir."

"Can I come in to-day?"

"Yes, to-day; everything is ready."

"Very well, madam. I presume Mr. Cornell will be sufficient reference; but if not, my uncle—"

"Quite sufficient, sir. We are bound to take many things on trust in this world."

"True, madam."

"We dine at half-past six, sir."

"I will endeavour to be punctual."

"Good morning, sir."

"Good morning, ladies."

I found my way downstairs alone; for although the lady with the curls rang the bell for the servant to show me out, that individual did not put in an appearance.

"Strange people," I thought, as I walked away—"strange people; they never asked me my name, or gave me theirs; and forgot even to show me the room. I hope it will answer."

Notwithstanding his threat to prevent me removing my things, I saw nothing of Mr. Coster on my return to Nelson-street.

I had packed up in the morning, and sending Mary out for a cab, I carried off my trunks and birdcages unmolested.

In about half an hour afterwards I was busy unpacking at Carlton-terrace; and my search for lodgings was at an end.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CARLISTS.

SINCE the fall of Queen Isabella, innumerable victories over the Carlists have been attributed to Spanish generals through

the medium of the telegraphic agencies. It is nevertheless a singular fact, that the more the Carlists are beaten the more do they seem to require beating. The truth is that the Carlist system of fighting is now, as it has always been, to harass the regular troops without ever risking a fair battle. Having done as much damage as they can conveniently do, they retire to their mountain positions, leaving the commander of the regulars to flatter himself that he has won a victory. The telegrams recording such victories simply prove that the Carlists are active and confident; and, in proportion as they are frequently beaten by telegraph, we may safely conclude that they are formidable in reality. It is the nature of the country, as well as of the resources of the Carlist party, that renders this system of warfare the most expedient. A few notes on the Carlists and their country, derived from long residence and much pedestrian exploration, may be both useful and interesting at the present time.

The two extremities of the Pyrenees are the peculiar country of the Carlists; it is in the Basque district, from St. Jean de Luz to Roncesvalles, and in northern Catalonia, from Puycerda to St. Laurent de Cerdans, that their inroads are planned and commenced. On one side or other of these two sections of the Pyrenean frontier, the Carlists have been rarely wanting since Queen Isabella fell; either they have been quartered in the villages and towns on the French side, or they have been fighting on the Spanish side. It is almost within rifle-shot of the French frontier that some of the recent fights have taken place. Puycerda is just upon the frontier; and Ainhoue, recently mentioned as a Carlist position, is a French frontier village in the Basque country.

St. Jean de Luz, an old port within the French frontier, has usually, of late years, been the Carlist head-quarters. Spanish priests abound there. Don Carlos makes flying appearances in the neighbourhood; and gentlemen in cloaks, who pass their time in smoking cigarettes and playing monte, are plentifully sprinkled about the streets. The poorer Carlists, who can find no plausible excuse for residing in the town, are concealed in haylofts by the country proprietors, or camp out in the neighbouring woods; and, with the assistance they receive from the people, and their pay of a franc

a day from the Carlist funds, they lead an easy and lazy life that suits the Spanish temperament. Their perpetual smoking is a great annoyance to their protectors, for several valuable barns have already been burnt through this cause; but as across the frontier a large cigar costs a halfpenny, and cut tobacco is proportionably cheap, the unoccupied Carlists can hardly be restrained from indulging in this frugal enjoyment, even at the risk of setting fire to the haylofts where they sleep.

In this manner we may perhaps account for a fire, accompanied by very curious circumstances, that occurred at St. Jean de Luz, when the Carlists were planning a descent on Pampeluna. An English steamer had anchored in the bay, and, about ten at night, two carts loaded with coal were unloading into the steamer's boats. About the same time, some of the young Carlists, who were deep in monte at the club, observed that a fire was reddening all the sky above a hill near the town. They gave notice to the bellringer, and the alarm bells rang out with extra force, for the glow of the fire was both intense and rapidly increasing. The police, and all the inhabitants that were still in the streets, immediately hurried to the burning farm, which was situated about a mile from the town. On arriving, they discovered that the farmer had most cleverly contrived to remove all his furniture, and that he had happily insured his house a few days before. Meanwhile, boats manned by the fishermen of the place, and under the orders of a Carlist priest, landed seven hundred stand of arms from the English steamer. Before the police and the other inhabitants returned from the fire, the arms had been carted off by the two coaling-carts, and were safely concealed in the town, or already on their way to the mountains. Three hundred rifles were subsequently seized by the French douaniers, in a farmhouse on the frontier; the rest have probably done good service in the recent fights.

At this time, things had reached such a pass in St. Jean de Luz that one evening the commissaire de police himself was politely requested by a stranger at the railway station to direct him to the Carlist bureaux. The stranger was an envoy from Carlist functionaries at Bordeaux, and had evidently acquired the notion that at St. Jean de Luz the French authorities allowed

the Carlists to carry on their schemes in open day. Those that happened to be present immediately hustled him out of reach of the enraged commissaire. But strong measures have of late been taken by the French Government; troops scour the woods in the neighbourhood, and passports are required upon the roads. The Carlists, however, still make free with the frontier. A few weeks since, when I was dining with some friends at a place on the estuary of the Bidasoa, I heard that a rosary, some cartridges, and numerous footmarks on the beach, had testified that morning to a landing of Carlists during the night; while, the same evening, one of my acquaintances, on his way to join us, passed five Carlists dressed as women, who were striding through the night towards the frontier bridge.*

The valley of the Bidasoa is shielded from the rest of Spain by a range of lofty mountains. At Vera and other places of Carlist renown it opens into fertile basins; but these can be reached only through narrow defiles, or over the lofty ridge that separates them from Pampeluna. Another lofty ridge divides the head of this valley from a patch of Spain that lies altogether on the French side of the Pyrenees; and Ainhoa, where the Carlists have lately been exhibiting themselves, is situated on the frontier of this patch. Such lofty ridges and narrow defiles are the main cause of the backward state of Spain. Whatever truth there may be in speculations as to hereditary tendencies of the Spanish race, there can be no doubt that the troubles of Spain are immensely favoured by the physical conformation of the country. Large, populous districts, like the Basque valley of the Bidasoa, or the upper reaches of the Rio Segre, in Catalonia, are separated from the rest of Spain by natural barriers that can be easily defended; and this not merely in the Pyrenees, but in nearly every Spanish province. Owing to the nature of the rocks, and to the peculiarities of the climate, the ridges

are usually so abrupt, and the defiles so deep and narrow, that vast efforts of engineering would be required to intersect them with roads. Roads have, therefore, been rarely constructed as yet, and thus large populations are almost cut off from all community of interests and traffic with the rest of Spain, and are easily, and with little danger to themselves, incited to revolt. In all questions regarding Spain, from political liberties to the value of mines, this peculiarity of its physical conformation should be borne in mind; but such is the general ignorance of Spanish geography, that in all such questions it has been usually disregarded, and the most absurd speculations, both theoretical and practical, have resulted from this neglect.

The district of Urgel, in Catalonia, is a striking example of this curious isolation. Urgel is an episcopal town, with an extensive citadel, a huge seminary, and a bishop who is sovereign prince of Andorra, and who, when his vassals are unruly, thinks nothing of raising a band of armed partizans, and marching them off to enforce his commands. The town lies in a great fertile basin, rich in vines and olive trees, and into which open gorges leading to Puycerda, Andorra, and other places. Except through the basin of Urgel, these places are almost inaccessible from the rest of Spain. A large and populous district is thus dependent for its accessibility upon the nature of the road that connects Urgel with the plains. This road is a rough mule path, that, following the course of the Rio Segre, enters, a short distance below Urgel, a series of the most tremendous gorges that can be found in Europe. Precipices, that hardly leave room for the stream to pass, rise perpendicular or overhanging to a height of from one to two thousand feet, and are capped by steep slopes of equal or greater altitude. The mule path is now excavated into the base of the precipice, now carried along shoulders of overhanging rock, and often crosses from side to side by their fragile bridges, so as to take advantage of the most practicable points. Here troops could march only in single file, and a dozen men might prevent the passage of an army. But to construct an ordinary road through this defile, or over the summit of the mountains, would involve engineering difficulties such as have been rarely faced. It was to avoid this gorge that the Spanish Government lately ob-

* I may mention that St. Jean de Luz hates republicans; that its fishwives hunted the envoy who announced the declaration of the French Republic; that the tree of liberty was repeatedly cut down in the night, until its greatly reduced proportions were guarded by the fixed bayonets of a patrol; and that the recent anniversary of the Pope was celebrated with brilliant illuminations, including the frequent and conspicuous inscription of "Viva el Papa Rey."

tained permission to send arms to Puycerda through France.

Puycerda is reached from Urgel by a rocky gorge about twenty miles in length. The town is situated near the centre of the great basin of Cerdagne, a vast sloping hollow on the watershed of the Pyrenees. Bounded on three sides by precipices and steep slopes, this basin ends towards France in a bleak, swelling saddle, across which the French territory laps over so as to include the upper portion of the basin, almost to the houses of Puycerda. A round patch of Spanish territory, called Livia, has been left within this portion of France, and is only joined to the Spanish frontier by the singular anomaly of a "neutral road." I visited Puycerda, after walking from St. Laurent de Cerdans, by mountain paths that traverse Olot, Ribas, Tosas, and other places that are favoured by the Carlists. Olot was filled with volunteers, on their way to seek the Carlists at the frontier, and their bugles wakened me at my posada, summoning them to march to Campredon. Many of them were mere boys of fourteen or sixteen, who, in swaggering and general bumpiousness, reminded me of Garibaldi's Neapolitan warriors. But in the mountain defiles I passed bodies of regulars; and, when sleeping at Tosas, I was awakened by the bugle, to find a score of soldiers stretched around me on the floor, their shakos and knapsacks dangling over my head. At Ribas I was arrested, and my revolver temporarily impounded; but as my papers proved satisfactory I was not long detained. Acquaintances in Andorra had recommended me to innkeepers at Tosas and Puycerda, and I enjoyed at both places the luxuries of tolerable food and a clean bed. My host at Puycerda urged me to remain over the Sunday, for on that day the market was held and the theatre opened, so that the peasants who assemble from the neighbourhood could combine business, pleasure, and religious observances in the same day's excursion. But I was obliged to start on a long tramp to Urgel; and my road was enlivened all the morning by parties of peasants, moving in bands, on mule-back and on foot, to market, theatre, and church. The men wore the red or brown Phrygian cap, and were usually dressed in jackets, knee-breeches, and stockings of coarse wool, which, with a red or green sash, and hempen sandals, form a picturesque costume. The

women, wearing black hoods that rise into a curved and pointed horn, had a singularly fantastic appearance.

The basin of Cerdagne is dotted with houses and villages; and the twelve hundred Carlists, who were recently repulsed from Puycerda by the gallant conduct of its inhabitants, must have done sad damage in the neighbourhood. Puycerda itself presents some resemblance to the old town of Edinburgh. It covers the back of a small isolated hill, rising to a sort of flimsy citadel at its highest extremity. The houses are partly surrounded by the vestiges of old fortifications, partly by a network of garden walls composed of dried mud. A few barricades would readily convert the place into a fortification, tenable against assailants unprovided with artillery.

Such rude fortifications are a very curious feature of the remote districts of Catalonia. The smallest towns are usually built in a compact mass, so that the outer sides of the houses unite into a continuous wall, which is pierced in its lower portion by only a few loopholes, or is often wholly blank. The two ends of the main street are often the only entrances, and these are provided with gates, so that the place can at once be converted into a fortification. Between such primitive bulwarks and the bastions of a regularly walled town, every degree of gradation may be found in Catalonia; the impression is continually forced upon one that the population have felt the necessity of making their habitations defensible by any means, and with the least conventional engineering and expense. Old ruins of castles and embattled monasteries are frequently blended into these rude defences, and the remains of mediæval walls often in great part compose them. But in some districts the smallest hamlets are so built as to constitute a fortification, and are perched high on the sides of valleys or on the summits of isolated hills. About the lower reaches of the Segre, the solitary farms are thus fortified, and are often built on great blocks of red conglomerate that stand out abruptly from the surrounding soil; vast, rolling plains, carpeted with vines and corn, there extend to the horizon; but not a house can be seen for miles, except where, at long intervals, a great dark block of building rises abruptly, like a monastery in the desert. Coming down from the mountains, in these Catalonian districts, it is curious to step suddenly, in the midst of

the fields, into the termination of a fine carriage road that has been abruptly abandoned on the occurrence of the last political convulsion; and to observe, farther down, solitary stonebreakers that keep it in repair, each working with a carbine and cartouche-box slung on a pole beside him. Until these roads are continued and completed, we may hope in vain for a solution of the Spanish question.

TABLE TALK.

ON the great question of the abilities and disabilities of women, Mr. Bruce said that, if women could not perform all political duties, they could not claim all political rights; but this measure does not bestow all rights, nor impose all duties. As to the discussions of the relative strength and ability of men and women, they are utterly beside the mark. Their names (those of female householders) are already on the rate-book; they vote for guardians of the poor, for municipal councillors, and for school boards; they are eligible as overseers, and are in many cases anxiously sought as members of school boards; but when a member of Parliament has to be elected, they are unable to vote. Mr. Jacob Bright may succeed in removing this disability as he desires; it is only strange that he asks for so little, as the champion of the fair sex. Why should not ladies sit on the bench, for instance, as justices of the peace? For this there is a precedent. The Countess of Richmond, mother to Henry VII., was a justice of the peace. "Justice Joanes affirmed that he had often heard from his mother of the Lady Bartlet, mother to the Lord Bartlet, that she was a justice of the peace, and did set usually upon the bench with the other justices in Gloucestershire. Another case was that of a lady named Rowse, in Suffolk, who usually, at the assizes and sessions there held, set upon the benche among the justices." This information is to be found in the Harleian MSS., and in "Notes and Queries" for May 19, 1855.

THE FOLLOWING good story of a bishopric gained by a pun may, perhaps, be new to some readers of ONCE A WEEK. James I. had as his private chaplain a clergyman named Mountaigne, with whom he was on very intimate terms. The bishopric of London fell vacant; and so equal were the

conflicting claims of the various candidates that the King was puzzled whom to select. He confided his perplexity to his chaplain, who gave him this ready and witty advice:—"If ye have faith, and shall say to this *Mountaigne*, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea,' it shall be done." The King was so pleased with this apt and arch suggestion that he acted upon it, and Mountaigne was made Bishop of London. This is probably the most successful pun ever made. Wit does not often obtain such substantial proofs of appreciation. We recall, however, another instance, in which a single *jeu d'esprit* brought its author a very handsome recognition. James Smith, the elder of the two famous authors of "Rejected Addresses," having one evening met at a dinner party Mr. Strahan, the King's printer, who was then much enfeebled by old age and gout, though his faculties were still unimpaired, was so charmed with the old gentleman's manners and conversation that the next morning he sent him the following lines:—

"Your lower limbs seemed far from stout
When last I saw you walk;
The cause I presently found out
When you began to talk.
The power that props the body's length,
In due proportion spread,
In you mounts upwards, and the strength
All settles in the head."

Mr. Strahan showed his gratification and pleasure at the graceful compliment by immediately executing a codicil to his will, bequeathing the author £3,000. It was worth being a wit in those days; but those halcyon times have passed, and the author of happy pun or sparkling epigram may think himself lucky if he comes in for the traditional £5 which is popularly supposed to be "Punch's" ordinary remuneration for a good joke.

"THE PLACE to spend a melancholy evening:"—With Mr. Henry Irving at the Lyceum.

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No. 282.

May 24, 1873.

Price 2d.

MY LITTLE GIRL.

J. Gobel.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"READY-MONEY MORTIBOY."

PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XLIII. (*continued*).



THE women were horribly afraid of the fever. They would do anything for madame in the house—they would sleep on the verandah; but nothing would induce them to go into the rooms of the sick. However, it was something, in her desolation, to have even them with her; and, with a sense of companionship, she went back to watch her charges. The boy at last fell asleep, and she brought a chair and sat by Philip's bedside, watching his deep breath come and go.

The two women outside, curled under a blanket, chattered for a while, and then fell asleep. The watchman at first made a great show of wakefulness, expectorating loudly every time he passed the doors of the bed-room; finally, he, too, subsided into his usual corner and fell fast asleep, with his long stick in his hands. The dogs began by barking against each other, but gradually

grew sleepy and left off. The cocks, who disregard all times and seasons in Palmiste Island, loudly called for the sun about midnight. As he declined to appear at their bidding, they tucked their heads in again, and had another nap. And then the silence of the forest seemed to make itself felt; and Marie, her old superstitions coming back in all their force, almost gasped with the tension of her nerves. The room filled with ghosts—not ghosts that filled her with terror so much as regret. Her long-dead mistress, Adrienne, with long, floating light hair, seemed to be hovering in white robes in the moonshine; the faces of old acquaintances laughed at her from the dark corners of the room; or the still, sleeping face of Philip would suddenly change into the face of her dead lover. Voices, too, were whispering about her, till she could bear it no longer, and went out into the open air, to pace the verandah, and look upon the old familiar scene bathed in the silver moonlight.

Then she came back and prayed again—in the Catholic faith that had reared her—to the Madonna. What matter if no Madonna heard her? The prayer was the same to God, who hears all prayers and seems to grant so few. Does any one ever get all he prays for? I trow not. And yet we pray—pray against hope and certainty—though we see the advent of the Inevitable, and *know* that God will not turn it aside for any prayers or vehement calling-out of ours. But still we pray; and when the hand of death is on the nearest and dearest to us, when all that makes life sweet is to be torn from us, we betake ourselves to our knees, and so we go on praying till the world's end, despite the calm persuasion of the philosopher and the experience of a life. Only, by prayer we soften our hearts; and it seems as if God answers us by alleviating the blow, and giving some comfort while our sorrow is at its bitterest.

So, while Marie prayed, it seemed to her, in the dim light, as if the face of the sick man altered and softened. The fierce heat of the fever died away, his brow grew damp and chill, his hands soft and warm, and his breathing calm and regular. And, for the time, she fancied that her prayers were heard indeed.

Do you know that moment in the night—the passage, as it were, from day to day—when a chill breath seems to pass over the earth, and for a space all the world is hushed as if in death? You may feel it by sea or by land. I have shivered and trembled under its spell, while gasping for breath in the sulphureous Red Sea. Or in the heart of London, should you be awake, you lie and feel that yesterday is dead indeed, and the new day not yet fully born. This is the time when feeble old men and children die, and when death seems most terrible.

At this moment Philip woke. And at sight of his eyes the mother's heart leapt up, and she thanked God; for one part of her prayer, at least, was answered. For the delirium was gone, and her son was in his right mind. She did not dare to speak, while, on her knees at the bedside, she looked him face to face, and met his eyes, which gazed wonderingly into hers, so full of tears and tender love.

"There are so many ghosts," he murmured, "about this house, that I suppose you are another. You are the ghost of my mother."

"Ah, no—herself," she cried out. "No, my son, your own mother herself come to nurse you—your own loving mother. Oh, my boy, my darling—forgive me!"

"I am weak," he said, "and my head is confused. Touch me, that I may know you are no phantom of my brain. Kiss me, my mother."

She showered a thousand kisses on his poor thin cheeks; she took his head in her arms, and bathed it with her tears—those precious woman's tears, not all of repentance, but some of thankfulness and love, like those that once washed Our Saviour's feet—till Philip's heart, softened by suffering, broke down, and he wept aloud.

But then her fears took alarm, and she quickly dried her eyes. And when he would have spoken—when he would have answered some of her love with repentance and prayers—she forbade him to utter a word.

"Not yet, my son—not yet," she said. "To-morrow we will talk. Now, sleep again—or stay a moment."

She went to the old buffet in the dining-room, and found some claret, of which she made him take a few drops. This brightened his eyes for a moment; and then, overcome with his weakness, he fell asleep once more. Her heart danced within her—she could not sit still. Leaving him sleeping, she went out again to the verandah, and watched the coming dawn.

The moon was down by this time; and save the Southern Cross, paling before the coming day, all the stars were gone. Only the bright morning star was left in the east. The birds began to twitter in the trees, just in their dreams—as she remembered long ago—before the dawn; and the sweet words of the poet came into her mind:—

"Ah! sad and strange, as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square:
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more."

And she was sitting with the memories of bygone days, with her dying son in his last sleep—save the longest—while this gray summer dawn crept slowly up the east.

Slowly; but it came. First a dull gray, and presently a silver gray; and then those long, marvellous fingers of light which spread themselves out upon the world as though they would fain seize it, and make it their own. And then the rocks, which had been black, grew purple; the mist upon the nearest peak, which had been a cloud, became a bridal veil, drawn loosely round, and falling in a thousand folds upon the woods below. And then a few short minutes of bright green, and red, and gold, and the great sun bounded into the sky with a single leap, and another day was born to the world. And then the birds all flew about to greet the sun; from the woods chattered the monkeys; the lizards woke up, and began to hunt about for the hottest places, blinking at the light; the dogs from the camp resumed their musical contest in Amæbean strains, just where they had left it off the previous night; the cocks began to crow and make a great triumph, as if they had compelled the sun to come back by their own personal efforts; the turkeys began to strut about with a great bubbling and cackle; the mules came out and rolled in the cane

straw; the mosquitoes all went away to bed; and the women's voices began, in the way she knew so well—the women always seemed to waken first—to rail at their lords from the huts of the camp. Her own two companions of the night shook themselves together, and greeted her kindly. She set them to make some tea, and sat with her hands crossed, looking before her at the bright and hopeful morning.

Presently she remembered the little Indian, and went to look at him in his bed. Alas! alas! the poor child was dead. Without a sound, or she would have heard it through the open door, his spirit had gone from him in the night; and he lay, cold and stiff, in the careless grace of sleeping childhood—his head pillowed on his arm, his eyes closed. Struck with terror, she turned to the other room. There, at least, was sleep—kinsman, but not friend, of death. And sitting patiently by the bedside, she resumed her watch.

The hours passed on; the sun grew high; but still he slept. About ten arrived the doctor—she had simply sent for the nearest doctor; but she recognized an old friend of George Durnford's, and went to meet him as an acquaintance.

He took off his hat—Doctor Staunton—and seeing an unknown lady who held out her hand, took it with great astonishment.

"Pardon me, madam, I—"

"Oh, Doctor Staunton, you have forgotten me, then? But come in quickly."

He went in without a word, and began to listen to her account of his patient.

"It is a bad case, madam—a very bad case. I ought to have been sent for four days ago. If you are interested in him—"

"Interested? Oh! Doctor Staunton, is it possible you have forgotten me? I am his mother."

"You—Marie? Can it be, indeed? I thought you dead. Tell me about yourself. My poor child—I mean—"

"Never mind, Doctor. People call me Madame de Guyon. But tell me about my son."

"Madame de Guyon? Is it possible that you are—"

"Yes—I am the singer. But now tell me about my son."

"Marie—be strong—strong to hear the worst. He cannot live. No human art can save him."

She sat down, dry-eyed.

"When will he die?"

"We cannot tell. Perhaps in an hour. Perhaps in two. He will die before the evening. I will stay with you to the end."

She covered her face with her hands, not to weep, but to keep back the hard, rebellious thoughts that surged up in her bosom. In a few moments she stood up and began to busy herself about her boy, smoothing his pillows, and laying the sheets straight.

"I heard," she said, "in England—Arthur Durnford told me—that he was being led away by bad companions. I am sure his heart was good. I came out thinking to try and save him. I find him dying. Oh! Doctor, save him. You loved George Durnford, who loved me—for his sake save him. In all his life, since he was a baby—since I gave him up to his father, this is only the third time I have seen him. And, Doctor Staunton, he loves me still. Oh! save him."

"Marie, I cannot."

"And why?"—she turned fiercely upon him—"why did you not save him before, for his father's sake? Why, when you knew that he was here and—that he was not what he should be—did you not come and reason with him? Oh," she added, bitterly, "I know the reason—I had almost forgotten, after four and twenty years of England, that his mother was a mulatto."

"I swear, Marie," said the old Doctor, earnestly, "that you wrong me. I came here—I came twice. The first time—I must tell it you—I was insulted; I came again, and he listened to me. I have been ill myself, and could not come a third time."

"Doctor," cried a weak, thin voice from the pillow, "I thank you, and again I beg your forgiveness."

Marie was at his side in a moment, kissing and fondling him.

"What shall he have, Doctor? What will you give him? Tea—oh! here it comes."

Doctor Staunton ordered him some simple things.

"I have heard what you have been saying," said Philip. "I shall die to-day."

"Oh! no, my son—oh! no—God will not permit it."

"God knows, dear mother, that it is the best thing I can do. Perhaps that is the reason why he lets me do it. Doctor, I have a good deal to say to my mother, and

a very little time to say it in. Leave us for a little. But first shake hands with me."

Left alone—

"Kiss me, mother," said Philip. "Tell me that you forgive me. Mother, in my weakness I implore your pardon."

"Oh! Philip, with all my heart's love I forgive you. You did not know me. You could not know I was your mother, indeed. It was I who was wrong. There is nothing to forgive, dear."

"But there is," he said. "I knew you were my mother, directly you told me so. I *felt* it. But I was proud, and I had just—without knowing all my wickedness, it is true—robbed Arthur of his inheritance. And I could not bear to give it back again. My heart, too, was bitter with that other wrong I had committed—oh! my mother, a deeper wrong, even, than what I did to you. You may forgive me for one, but you can never forgive me for the other."

"Hush, my boy. It is all forgiven."

"All?" He hardly seemed astonished, and had forgotten how she knew.

"All. Laura told me herself. She bade me take out to you her love and pardon. She implored me to bring her out with me. She says that all she wants now is to hear one loving word from you, to treasure up and hide the memory of all the things you did and said—when you did not know what you were saying, my dear."

Philip turned his face, and wept on the pillow.

"Wipe my eyes, mother. I am so weak that I cannot even do that for myself. And now get some paper, and write a letter for me. But call the Doctor first."

Marie went to get the paper. Before she came back, Doctor Staunton had administered a restorative.

"How long?" asked Philip of the Doctor.

"Don't talk too much, or you will kill yourself in an hour."

"Good," said Philip. "Write, dear mother—"

"DEAREST WIFE—I have but a short time now to live. With my last breath, I ask pardon of you for the grievous wrongs I have done you. No punishment could be too great for me. My mother tells me you have sent me your forgiveness. My dear, if I could tell you how I have repented—if you knew the bitter remorse that has seized me since I have been in this place! But

all is over at last. The great weight is lifted. God has sent my mother with her love and pardon. I go into the other world. I have been a bad man, and have led a bad life. Only if God lets me ask anything——"

"My son!" cried Marie.

"If God lets me ask anything, I will ask Him to bless you both. This is my only prayer—I dare have none for myself. My dear—my Laura—I am very, very sorry. Think only for the future that I loved you all along. God bless you, my wife.—Your most affectionate and penitent husband,

'PHILIP.'

He signed it with feeble fingers, guided by Marie, and then fell back.

"I should like to write to Arthur, but I cannot. Write for me, and tell him how I repented, and ask his forgiveness. MacIntyre wanted me to do it eight years ago, but I refused. You will write, won't you, dear mother?"

She promised.

"Sing to me, dear mother; you sing so well. I should like to hear your voice once more. Sing me a hymn."

It was a cruel trial. She steadied herself and sang—his head upon her shoulder—with all her fulness and richness of voice, so that the old Doctor wiped his brimming eyes at the sound—

"Abide with me—fast falls the eventide:

The darkness deepens—Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless! oh, abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,
Life's joys grow dim, its glories fade away——"

His cheek dropped against hers. She stopped in sudden affright.

"Mother," he murmured, very faintly, "is it growing dark? Is it night already?"

"Oh, Philip!"

"I think I am dying—give my love to Laura. Kiss me, mother. Shall we meet again?"

"My boy—in Heaven. I could not go there without you."

His head fell heavily forward. He was dead.

The little Indian boy was buried that same evening, in the Indian cemetery on the hillside. Small funeral rites had he, and no

mourners. The man who dug his grave, and carried him under his arm to the place of sepulture, all out of the goodness of his heart and a kind of natural piety, placed a bottle on the grave, so that, should he perchance awake, there might be means of at least slaking his thirst. And in India perhaps his mother waited for him to come, and wondered, looking as the years went by, that he delayed so long. The life of man is short at the best; but the shorter it is, the less of bitterness he knows. Solomon said much the same thing.

Doctor Staunton stayed with Marie. After the first burst of passionate grief, she began, woman-like, to find her consolation. And the thought that his last few hours were spent in love and repentance—that the memory she would have of her son would not be of cruel insult and wrong, but of tenderness and affection, made her thank God for one great mercy at least.

They buried him the next day, in the nearest English churchyard, close to his father's grave. After his feverish life, it was consoling to his mother's heart to carry with her his last few words of repentance and sorrow. She treasured them up, and, when she thought of them, she forgot the cruel scene in London, his harsh words, his tones of mockery and pride, remembering only his tender love at the last, and, when all was over, his calm face set with the sweet, sad, unchanging smile of death.

They buried him as the sun went down into the sea. The fierce heat of a tropical summer day was over; and night, with its perfect calm, was stealing upon the world when the last words of the funeral service were pronounced, and the mould rattled upon the coffin of poor Philip. Marie thought of his life; of the storm and hurricane when she left him with his father, and went back alone through the forest; of the blight that his birth had thrown upon him; of his wasted energies, ruined hopes, and cruel misdeeds; and of the sweet calm and peace of the end. And it seemed to her that this tropical day was an emblem of his life, with its fierce and scorching heat, its turbulent hurricanes, and its peaceful night.

The clergyman read the service, and went away. Then Marie saw that she and the Doctor were not the only mourners; for, with their hats off, and kneeling on the sward, were her two brothers, Adolphe and

Alcide. Stepping reverently forward, they each threw a handful of mould upon the coffin—their first and last claim at kinship. And then the two poor fellows walked slowly away, and Marie saw them no more.

She went back to the estate, the old Doctor keeping her company; and though Palmiste knew that the great singer had been to their island, and was at Fontainebleau when young Durnford died, no one knew on what errand she had come, nor what was her relationship to Philip. Doctor Staunton kept the secret well. Nor did she think it necessary to tell Adolphe Napoleon Rohan de Montmorenci that Marie was not dead, after all. What would have been the use? It was not any false shame. If all the world knew that her brothers were poor blacks, gaining a living by driving a *voiture de place*, it would have mattered nothing to her. No one in England would think the worse of her. A singer is not expected to be of unblemished family, more than any other professional person. And what good could she do to her relations? They were happy; they had no wants that they could not satisfy; they had no ambition; they desired nothing, looked for nothing. Moreover, between them and herself so great a gulf was fixed that it could not be passed. And whatever her childhood had been, she was now a lady. Lastly, there was this. Her story no one knew except one or two persons in England, and one person in Palmiste. There was no need for any one to know. She had suffered almost everything that a woman can suffer, except what tortures women most—the loss of her reputation. Blameless and pure in conduct, she had passed through the theatre without a reproach, whispered or spoken. She had learned, soon enough, the value of fair fame, and she was not disposed to give it up. Therefore she kept the secret to herself.

Turning over Philip's papers, she found among them evidences, not only of the power he undoubtedly possessed, but of thoughts which showed him in a better light—which betrayed the causes of his wreck, the fatal moral wreck which his nature had sustained when he learned, through the man who was his evil genius, that he was illegitimate, and touched with the blood of the lower race.

Philip, until the last few months of his life, had been in the habit of writing; not for papers or magazines—partly because it

never occurred to him to write for them, and partly because he did not write well enough. But his loose papers, heaped together in his desk, written on slips and fragments of paper—sometimes in a few words, sometimes many—sometimes in prose, sometimes in verse—showed that he knew himself capable of good things, and that, though he followed the worse, he approved the better.

She burnt them all but one. This she kept, and sent to Laura. It had no title, and consisted of four stanzas—rough verses enough, but not without an element of power.

“Go, dig my grave for me—
Not where the painted sunlight lights the aisle,
Not where, through glories of the pillared pile,
The silver-voiced choir
Sing o’er the sacred bones of glorious dead
The strains of David’s lyre.

Rather seek out for me
Some village churchyard where the world comes
not:

Where mounds ignoble cover men forgot:
Where the black branching yew
O’erhangs with midnight shade the moss-grown
stones,
And hides the graves from view.

Bury me there, and write
No long inscription on a marble stone:
Only a head-cross, with these words alone—
‘He dared not—therefore failed.’
Let the dishonour of a coward heart,
So set forth, so be veiled.

Let no man weep for me:
Rather rejoice that one whose will was weak
No longer cumber earth; and when they speak
(Not with breath bated), say,
God made the world for those who dare be strong:
Well, that the weak decay!”

She kept these lines only, and on his grave set up the head-cross he wished, with his own words, “He dared not: therefore failed.” Under them she wrote—“P. D. Aged twenty-six.”

Over his grave, and his father’s, wave the tall filhaos, with their long, mournful sough, singing a perpetual lament over the sins and sorrows of the dead. In this forgotten corner of the world—no longer a memory even in Palmiste, though few years have as yet gone by since he died—he lies at rest. Arthur and his wife, and their children, will, perhaps, be laid beside him; but not Marie. Another grave is hers—a wider one, but, I think, quite as peaceful.

She sent Philip’s last words to Laura and Arthur by the next mail. She stayed to

finish what she had to do; left presents for her people, to be given by Doctor Staunton; and embarked again for England in the first homeward-bound ship, happier, if more sad, than when she arrived but a short month before.

THE RIVER FLOWETH ON.

A SPOT where all things earthly seem
To make a tarrying-place for love,
Where bright and gay the lingering stream
Reflects the summer sky above:
Two lovers by the river stand;
And while they speak of day-tides gone,
Heart strained to heart, hand clasped in hand,
The river floweth on.

And now the winter tide hath come,
One standeth by the water-side—
“O river, river, take me home;
My life, my life, farewell!” she cried.
The moonbeams shine upon a face,
Upon a dead, cold face and wan;
While softly by the trysting-place
The river floweth on.

GORDON CAMPBELL.

A CASE AGAINST ALMA MATER.

IV.

IN Horrebov’s “Natural History of Iceland” there occurs this noteworthy example of historical brevity:—

“CHAPTER XLII.

CONCERNING OWLS.

“There are no owls of any kind in the whole island.”

Had I imitated that quaint Hibernicism, and in writing a paper on “Female Society at the University” confined myself to the statement, “There is in the University no female society of any kind whatever,” I should have been held by many competent judges to have exhausted the subject, and said all that was necessary. For Alma Mater professedly neither recognizes nor tolerates the presence of females within her hallowed precincts. By a legal fiction they are said not to exist; and therefore, of course, it is unnecessary to make any provisions with regard to them. I wish, in the present paper, to show the absurdity of that legal fiction, and the curious anomalies which it produces. From the very earliest times the Universities have shown a rabid aversion to women. Not more rigid precautions were taken to keep Satan out of Paradise than were adopted to keep women, especially

young women, out of the quiet retreats consecrated to celibacy and study.

One of the earliest and drollest of these precautionary measures is to be found among the old statutes of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, and the ideas which it suggests are so quaint and humorous, that I shall make no apology for quoting it at length:—"We enact, by way of prohibition, that no washerwomen, more especially young ones—if men can be found *expert in the washing of heads**—shall enter the chambers of the scholars, either openly or secretly, under any pretext or colour whatever; but that if any female of their relations, or any other honest females, should desire to hold counsel, conversation, or discourse with them for any honourable and lawful reasons, the interview shall take place in the Hall, or in some other respectable place, in the presence of some other scholar, or at least some honest servant of the house, if any one can be easily obtained, *the conversation being carried on in this manner discreetly*, which matter we lay upon their own consciences. And we further enact that the scholars' vestments to be cleansed by means of laundresses shall be carried to them to be cleansed by one of the sworn attendants of the said college, whenever it may be necessary, and afterwards be brought back again, when cleansed, by him or some other—unless, perchance, they may have a male washer. But if the scholars *stand in need of having their heads washed, or their beards shaved*, that the master shall provide a person for that purpose—the porter, if possible, or some other servant of the college, who may be both able and willing to perform both offices. *It is better, certainly, that all these matters be performed by males, than that, by the coming in of women, anything should by any means happen to the scandal of the whole college.*"

One would scarcely have cared to converse with a female relation, or to hold counsel, conversation, or discourse, with "any other honest female," even for "honourable and lawful reasons," with the college porter standing by as the representative of decorum. And as for the head washing and shaving by women, all we can say is that the authorities were wise to abolish it; for had it been still retained, I fear the barbers' bills—which, as I have already shown, are

quite formidable enough—would assume perfectly appalling proportions.

It is easy to trace in these old statutes the origin of that peculiar type of womanhood, of which the only extant specimens are college bedmakers and Temple laundresses, which seems to combine in beautiful harmony the minimum of cleanliness with the maximum of ugliness. Those to whom is entrusted the task of selecting bedmakers seem to think themselves bound to fulfil literally the injunction which the lord of the feast in the parable gave to his servants—"Go out into the streets of the city, and bring in hither the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." I think, however, that some little laxity might be safely allowed them, and they need not adhere with such scrupulous conscientiousness to Biblical precedent. A battered and hideous old harridan, who befouls everything she touches, may be a treasure worth her weight in gold to some advanced misogynists; but to the ordinary alumnus of Alma Mater she is a disgusting nuisance. There may be some deep purpose in forcing young men daily to contemplate these repulsive forms of womanhood. In the olden time it may possibly have had the effect of inducing scholars to look with resignation upon enforced celibacy—for aught I know, it may have the same effect in some cases now; but I would humbly suggest to the University authorities that if women are to be employed at all, the duties for which they are required would be much more pleasantly and efficiently performed by decent, clean, well-favoured, middle-aged women, than by these wrinkled and unclean old harpies.

It is, however, to that rampant old maid, Queen Bess, that the University owes the most important and obnoxious enactments against the presence of women in any higher capacity than that of menial drudges. That soured and disappointed spinster lost no opportunity of wreaking her vengeance upon her own sex; and it gave her a keen delight to hinder her lieges from enjoying connubial bliss, whenever she could, by any lawful means, restrain their liberty. Casting her eyes about for some opportunity of gratifying her bitter spite, she fixed upon the Universities. One can conceive her maiden horror at finding that among those societies of learned men, professing study and prayer for the edification of the Church of God, "of late as well the chief governors as

* The Italics, I need hardly say, are my own.

the prebendaries, students, and members thereof being married, do keep particular household with their wives, children, and nurses; whereof no small offence groweth to the intent of the founders, and to the quiet and orderly profession of study and learning within the same." To prevent this evil example from spreading, therefore, she "expressly willesh and commandeth that no manner of person, being either the head or member of any college within this realm, shall have or be permitted to have, within the precinct of any such college, his wife or other woman to abide or dwell in the same, or to frequent and haunt any lodging within the same college."

Except in so far as it refers to the masters of colleges, of whom celibacy is no longer exacted, these enactments remain in force at the present day. And the dons would seem, until lately, to have become infected to a large extent with the harsh and crabbed spirit which pervades all these restrictions. They have jealously excluded women from the college precincts, as much and as long as it was possible for them to do so. Living apart from the society of women; knowing nothing of their nature; adopting, without troubling to inquire into their truth, those traditions of cynicism and misogyny which are the natural outgrowth of centuries of enforced celibacy, the dons dread the very sight of women, and seem to believe that their admission into college social life would produce such discord and confusion as Swift describes reigning when ladies meet:—

"When frightened at the clamorous crew,
Away the God of Silence flew,
And fair Discretion left the place,
And Modesty with blushing face.
Now enter overweening Pride,
And Scandal, ever gaping wide;
Hypocrisy with frown severe,
Scurrility with gibing air,
Rude Laughter seeming like to burst,
And Malice always judging worst;
And Vanity with pocket-glass,
And Impudence with front of brass;
And studied Affectation came,
Each limb and feature out of frame;
While Ignorance, with brain of lead,
Flew hovering o'er each female head.

But the Dean of St. Patrick's is too rabid and insane a misogynist for even a college don to adopt as a guide to the character of women. And I think all the bad qualities enumerated in that long list do not always wait to sail in under the convoy of a petticoat: they are not unknown even in those

secluded spots where the rustle of a lady's dress is seldom heard. As a set-off against the Dean's tirade, let us put Shakspeare's idea of the efficacy and importance of women's influence in every system of education, and leave our friends the dons to strike the balance between the two for themselves:—

"For where is any author in the world
Teaches such beauty as a woman's eyes?
Learning is but an adjunct to ourself,
And where we are, our learning likewise is:
Then, when ourselves we see in ladies' eyes,
Do we not likewise see our learning there?"

For when would you
In leaden contemplation have found out
Such fiery numbers as the prompting eyes
Of beauteous tutors have enriched you with?
From women's eyes this doctrine I derive;
They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
They are the books, the Arts, the Academes
That show, contain, and nourish all the world."

It would be rash, perhaps, to endorse this view of the happy educational results achieved under such tutorage, for another poet has given a less encouraging account of the effect of study under such auspices:—

"My only books
Were woman's looks,
And folly's all they've taught me."

That was Tom Moore's experience. Still, if you come to that, folly may be learnt out of worse books than these—books, too, which Alma Mater, with all her prudishness, has not yet placed upon her Index Expurgatorius; or, having been placed there, allows to be smuggled in under her very eyes, without so much as winking at the delinquency.

But, to look at the matter in a more serious light, this exclusion of women from the Universities is harmful to the undergraduate in two ways—first, as it directly affects himself; secondly, as it affects him through the celibacy of those who are his temporary guardians. I am quite aware that I am on ticklish ground here, and perhaps more likely to be laughed at than listened to; but I am looking at the Universities, not as they ought to be theoretically, but as they are practically. The laws and regulations of the place are all based upon the theory, the abuses and evils all grow out of the practice; and my object is to show that unless the theory will condescend to recognize the practice, and legislate accordingly, these evils and abuses must daily grow more grievous and more difficult to eradicate. Now, we have, practically, long since aban-

doned as absurd the idea that young men are sent up to Oxford and Cambridge to devote themselves to the study of Latin and Greek and mathematics. They are sent up, and every one knows it, to learn manners, to acquire that polished refinement which is as much a part of a gentleman's education as solid cultivation. Paley, who is an authority of weight at one of the Universities at least, has laid it down as an axiom that "bad manners are bad morals." Am I, therefore, asserting too much when I say that it behoves Alma Mater to devote herself especially to the cultivation of good manners? But how are good manners to be taught without feminine influence?

Dick Steele tells us of Lady Elizabeth Hastings, "that to behold her was an immediate check to loose behaviour; to love her was a liberal education." And though such women are doubtless rare, yet no one will deny, I think, that it is only the constant society of well-bred women that can give polish, and ease, and grace to a man's manners, and make him, in short, a gentleman. Is it not the duty of Alma Mater to supply this humanizing influence?

I can conceive that a don's first answer to such a question would be a roar of derisive laughter, to be quickly succeeded, perhaps, by a terribly lugubrious expression as the dim possibility of such an idea being realized dawned upon his mind. For your college don is, emphatically, not a ladies' man in any sense of the phrase. And I know of no sight more ridiculous, and at the same time more painful, than that of a college don lionizing a bevy of ladies in the May term. Such blushing, such awkwardness, such shyness, such a fish-out-of-water look, could only be matched by a village hobbledohy suddenly confronted by the squire's lady or the rector's daughters. And these are the teachers under whom young men are to learn to shake off the gaucherie of the schoolboy, and assume the easy manners of the gentleman! And this is the place at which all rough angularities are to be rubbed off, and the pupil is to be rounded into the smoothness which will make him a polished pillar of society! If it were still the object of the Universities to turn out scholars, and nothing but scholars, the exclusion of women might be defended and excused; for shyness, and awkwardness, and bashfulness have been from time immemorial the

special privilege of the bookworm and the scholar. But this is no longer the *métier* of Alma Mater. She has been gradually assimilating herself more and more, either from choice or from the necessities of the age, to the old mediæval schools of chivalry, whose object was to turn out accomplished knights, adepts in all manly exercises, of "full gentle and courteous manners." She should, therefore, to be consistent, follow fully the example of those old institutions, and recognize the value of woman's influence. The castles of the great Barons, which were the chief schools of chivalry and manners in the middle ages, received both sexes under their shelter. While the Baron took charge of the education of the young gentlemen, the Baroness superintended that of the young ladies; and, when their respective duties for the day were ended, there was no restriction placed upon their free intercourse. It is not, and never has been, Alma Mater's ambition to place herself in the van of any great movement, either intellectual or social. She is a staunch Conservative at heart, though she talks a little timid Liberalism at times; and she looks with the nervousness and distrust common to elderly females upon everything that bears the stamp of a liberal and progressive spirit. I should be the last, therefore, to shock the dear old lady by suggesting for a moment anything so improper as the idea of identifying herself with that party of progress whose "platform" is the equality of the two sexes, and the promotion of a freer and more intimate relationship between them in the matter of education. But I am surely not venturing beyond the limits of decorum when I say that she might, with advantage, take one step in what all enlightened men admit to be the right direction, by abolishing that unnatural tenure of celibacy by which college offices are held, and which has no more claims on her observance than a dozen other antiquated restrictions which she has long since chosen to disregard. A little feminine society thus introduced into college life would in every way be beneficial to both dons and undergraduates. Oh, there are a host of objections. I am quite aware of that; but, after all, they are not very formidable—certainly not more formidable than those which have been urged against many another scheme which has succeeded nevertheless. Let us look at one or two of these objections.

First, there is the pathetic appeal of shy and studious dons against the introduction of such horrors as nursery-maids, and perambulators, and squalling children into the quiet haunts of learning. Well, for the matter of that, I think it would take a good many squalling children to equal the noise of one convivial "wine" or roaring boat-supper; and I am not sure that even the squalling of children is not preferable to the howling of tipsy undergraduates.

It is objected, again, that the introduction of matrimony into college social life would destroy that delightful relationship which exists between the unmarried tutor and his pupils. I think I have already shown that this delightful relationship is a myth, and, like most of the other alleged charms of celibate companionship, merely a pleasant fiction, which serves as a convenient mask for a very dull and stupid and unsatisfactory reality. The tutor would not certainly be less accessible to his pupils as a married man than he is as a bachelor; and inasmuch as his own manners would be unquestionably improved, and much of his shyness removed, by the society of his wife, I think he would exercise an infinitely better and healthier influence over his pupils. It is not found that marriage interferes with a schoolmaster's usefulness, and that he sees less of his boys, or has less influence or control over them, in consequence; and I can see no reason for expecting a different result from the extension of the privilege of matrimony to college tutors.

It is urged, again, that the presence of ladies would *cause extravagance of living!* There is a delicious impudence about that objection which, I am sure, will be appreciated by the reader who has followed me through my case against Alma Mater. I confess I admire the capacity of that imagination which can conceive a state of things in which the Universities could possibly be worse off in that respect than they now are. So far from ladies increasing the tendency to extravagance, I think their presence would have just a contrary effect. The tutor with a wife and family would not only be less lavish and extravagant with his money than he is now without such ties, but he would sympathize more with other parents, and be more quick to detect extravagance among his pupils. He would be able to form a better notion of what excessive expenditure is. There would be less of that lavish

scattering of money which is common with well-to-do bachelors, and of which tradesmen are so ready to avail themselves. Alma Mater would then welcome as an honourable, and worthy, and useful handmaiden of education, a visitor never seen within her walls before—Economy; nay (who knows?), might allot her a special professor, and thus tardily acknowledge that social economy is quite as important a branch of a young man's education as political economy.

But enough of objectors and their arguments: it is sufficient to say that this absurd and unnatural restriction of celibacy is every year depriving the Universities of the men best qualified for the position of tutors, because they prefer to accept elsewhere appointments to which celibacy is not attached as a binding condition. Those who are celibates from choice are not the best men to watch over the interests of young men at that critical age when they enter upon a University career; and, indeed, so far as my experience goes, there is no creature in the world less fitted to elicit the confidence of young men, and place himself in sympathy with them, than an unmarried college don. In still encouraging celibacy, therefore, I think Alma Mater is deliberately closing one avenue through which much needed reform might come, with great benefit to herself and those under her care.

There is, however, another aspect of the question. The undergraduate is just of that impressionable age when he is most susceptible to feminine charms; and though he is not, as I have shown, likely to find those charms in his bedmaker, yet he has not to go very far to look for them. For Alma Mater is inconsistent in this as in every other matter. Here, as everywhere, she strains off the gnat and bolts the camel. The women whose society is courted by undergraduates, in default of better, are of a fast and flashy type, ranging from the young ladies at the superior hotels, through various stages of the bourgeoisie, down to the humble barmaid of the tavern. In every available position in which they are likely to catch the eye and attract the attention of the undergraduates, these fair decoy ducks are judiciously placed, with two objects in view: First, to wheedle money out of customers who come to flirt; and, secondly, if possible, to secure a husband. To marry a "Varsity man" is the highest ambition of these modest young women, and they succeed far

oftener than outsiders would suppose. I counted up, with an old college friend the other day, no less than ten cases within our own experience in which undergraduates at our own University had married girls beneath them in station. With one single exception—and in that instance the lady was old enough to be her husband's mother—not one of these girls was suited by education or manners to mix with women in her husband's rank of life.

Now these cases, it must be remembered, represent probably a much larger number of very narrow escapes, which are discreetly hushed up by all concerned. I am sure that fond parents at home would be inexpressibly pained, and startled, and disgusted if they knew to what an extent a considerable section of undergraduates associate with the wives and daughters of the smaller tradesmen, and what serious flirtations, to use no stronger term, are the result of these intimate relations.

I am not looking at the matter as a question of morals, but of manners. I have already said that the Universities—principally, I think, from their own fault—have come to be regarded practically as schools of manners rather than schools of learning. The change is, no doubt, a humiliating one; but there it is, and we must make the best of it. Now, is Alma Mater making the best of it? Can she be said to be really educating young men as gentlemen, and taking special care of their manners, when, by sedulously excluding ladies from the University, she removes the strongest check to deter young men from mixing with their inferiors in station, and the most powerful incentive to cultivate the amenities of social life?

It is ludicrous to see the Universities still cherishing the old, exploded theory of University life—pretending to believe that young men are sent up to acquire scholarship and learning, and framing their laws and regulations with a sublime disregard to facts, and to the altered circumstances which their own laxity and negligence have produced. For, after all, Alma Mater has only herself to blame that she has degenerated from a seat of learning into a mere gymnasium. With all her pretended love of liberal studies, with all her affected devotion to learning, what has she done—what is she doing—for the mental education of her sons? Almost nothing. What instruction she does provide is admitted to be

inadequate and insufficient, and all the real and effective teaching of the Universities has passed into the hands of private tutors, who are paid by their pupils and not by the colleges. The payment of a private tutor is a terrible tax upon a poor man; but, if he cannot afford to pay it, he must consider himself as hopelessly out of the race at once. His college will do nothing for him, and it is impossible for him to hold his own against richer competitors, who can afford to pay for the best instruction which is to be procured. But what does Alma Mater do with all her large yearly revenues, it may be asked? That is a question which she will be called upon to answer some day. I can only say what she does not do with it, and that is, provide for the education of her alumni. Let one significant example suffice. In the evidence given before the select committee on the Oxford and Cambridge Education Act, in 1867, Mr. Roby, speaking of his own college (St. John's), said "that not above £200 or £300 a year of the whole revenue of about £30,000 a year, is applied directly to the payment of instruction."*

And now, before I conclude, there is just one question which I would have every father ask himself before he sends his son up to the University: "Is the game worth the candle?" If he can afford to pay £1,000 to gratify a whim of gentility; if he cares to pay that price for the pleasure of seeing his son associate with gentlemen, learn the art of spending money freely, and become, perhaps, an adept in pedestrianism, cricket, or rowing, well and good. But if he expects any other return for his outlay, he will be grievously disappointed. In a very large majority of cases, the time and money spent upon a University career are simply and absolutely wasted, so far as preparation or training for any future profession or business is concerned. I take leave to express a grave doubt whether a man acquires any knowledge from an ordinary University course which will be of any practical use whatever to him in after-life. All his real professional and technical education is commenced after he leaves the University, when he is two or three and twenty years of age; and, surely, it cannot be maintained

* Since the above was in type, a memorial has been presented to Mr. Gladstone by the members of the University of Cambridge, praying for reform in this respect, and also in the matter of celibacy.

that a University career offers any advantages sufficient to outweigh the tremendous disadvantage of commencing the really practical part of education so late in life. I do not deny for a moment that a University course has its use and its value; but I maintain that, as the Universities are at present constituted, with all their encouragements to extravagance and idleness, every man not blessed with ample means will do well to pause and reflect before sending his son there, if that son is to depend upon his own exertions afterwards to earn his living. A University "education," while existing abuses continue, is not worth the money it costs. And it is in the hope of inducing the average British father to look seriously at the matter, in the light in which I have tried to set it, before taking a step which is so likely to result in nothing but disappointment and distress, that I have written these papers.

Gentlemen of the jury, that is my case against Alma Mater. I leave it to you to decide whether I have made it out to your satisfaction or not; and, in the event of there being no reply from the defendant's counsel, you will give your verdict in accordance with the facts which I have here brought before you in evidence.

SKETCHES OF IRISH LIFE.—VIII.

THE SOIRÉE.

WHEN we left him, Mr. Coodle, on being importuned by his son for the modest sum of one halfpenny, had duly dismissed that promising young gentleman with the imperative command to run away and amuse himself. He turned once more to William.

"Billy," said he, somewhat sadly, "yer a happy man, Billy."

"What do ye say that fur?" inquired Bill.

"Billy," continued he, "yer a happy man, Billy."

"Why, Misther Coodle?" asked Bill again. "What do you mane by that?"

"Billy," said the schoolmaster again, solemnly—"Billy, never reduce yerself to the state of human misery that I have, Billy." Whisper: "If ever you find yerself in the notion of marrying, go, like a sensible man, a week or two to the lunatic asylum, and get cured. Don't marry, Billy—don't marry!"

"Well, I hivn't tuck the notion yet; an' when I do, I'll let ye know," replied Bill, smiling. "But what's wrong wi' you and her now, that yer so much agin it?"

"Thirteen an' the baby, Billy—thirteen an' the baby! Only think of the responsibility attached to the gov—hic—governing member of such a family. Only think of the high moral duty—the—the—ye wouldn't believe, Billy, what it takes to feed them all."

"A purty tidy roughness, I wud say," said Bill, calmly.

"Ye wudn't believe it, Billy—ye wudn't believe it. An' the worst of it is, I'm beginning not to know which is which. If things didn't alter, I'll have to put tickets on them. If ye saw them climbing roun' me on Christmas Day for fardens a-piece, ye wud think—hic—ye wud think it wus the takin' of a town. Never git married, Billy—never git married!"

"Well," replied Bill, "it'll likely be the change of the moon before I do, any way; an' I'll likely see ye before then."

"Yis. Oh, never think of it, Billy! Ye niver know where ye are, till some evening ye dander home to find that you're a da. That's the key-note of yer troubles, Billy. It's all up with ye then. Ye know the owld apuffthem, that time flies. It *does* fly, Billy—flies like a—hic—hare. And the consequence is—" here was heaved a deep sigh—"thirteen an' the baby, Billy—thirteen an' the baby!"

"It's a purty good risin', sartinly," said Bill, thoughtfully; "an' the whole o' them must git through a power o' mate at a male, shurely. I wud think it wudn't take them long to make a hole in a bin o' pratees."

"Billy, ye have no—ye can have no—"

They were here interrupted in this conversation by the stewards removing the forms to a position whereby the sitters would all be facing the platform.

The first intimation Mr. Coodle got of the intention was the lifting of the form on which he sat by one of the said officious young men; at which critical moment he seemed to consider it his duty to alight on the floor, and elevate his nicely polished pair of boots—a little feat which he performed with astonishing celerity and grace.

The merriment his manœuvre had excited had scarcely subsided, when Mr. Goodwin announced upon the platform that, in the absence of Mr. Somebody-else, Mr.

Croppy would favour them with a recitation of "The Charge of Balaklava."

"D'ye know what I'm goin' to tell ye, my man? For two pins, I wud hit ye on the jaw—hic—a rattle," said Mr. Coodle to the offending steward, when he had scrambled up.

There is little doubt but that Mr. Coodle, in his present condition, would have carried the threat into execution, and would have got himself into an awkward scrape, had he not very fortunately had a guardian angel in Billy. The latter gentleman soon restored peace; and Mr. Croppy was seen to mount the platform, pull down his cuff, straighten himself up, and fix his eyes sternly upon a map of Greenland, which hung in one of the corners. Having then made a few strenuous endeavours to look like a warrior—whereas it was quite plain that he was shaking in his shoes with nervousness—he made one noble effort and began, with a valiant wave or two of the right hand—

"Half a league, half a league, half a league onward."

Immediately every jaw was dropped, and the wild gesticulations of the elocutionist every moment became a matter of more astonishment to the gaping audience. One rustic near us, after gazing a few minutes in the most profound wonder, turned to his equally mystified neighbour, and said—

"What's he guldherin' about, Sammy?"

Sammy was "blessed" if he knew; so they again dropped their jaws, and applied themselves to the gaping business. Mr. Croppy grew louder as he proceeded. The slight tremor that at first was noticeable in his voice was now quite gone, and he was shouting about, and waving the piano and Mr. Goodwin on to combat like another Picton. In one of these nobly enthusiastic sallies, however, in which he was illustrating how they broke through the line and demolished everybody round them, he happened to make an unusually zealous flourish of the hand; and immediately a very staid old gentleman behind him was observed to put his hand hurriedly up to his face, and begin to rock himself backwards and forwards in evident pain. We heard no more about Balaklava. Thus did it end:—

"Plunged in the battery smoke,
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian ree—" (thwack)

"Oh! I—I—I really beg your pardon;
I—I—I hope I haven't hurt you."

"Hurt me! Confound you, you have nearly broken my nose—that's all. My goodness! couldn't you have done without waving your arms about you in that horrible manner? I just thought somebody would be hurt when I saw you started."

"But, my dear sir, I—I—I really—I—I—I assure—I—I—I really didn't mean it."

"Oh, didn't—the devil! Good gracious! what was the use of flourishing your hands so near people's faces."

Our unfortunate friend happened to be of a rather irritable temperament, and Mr. Croppy, in his desire for the combat, had brought the back of his hand across his face with a force that must have been anything but comfortable. However, when the laughter of the audience had ceased, and his face began to assume its natural colour, his spleen died away, and, grasping Mr. Croppy's hand, he warmly apologized for his rudeness of speech, and begged that gentleman to proceed with his delightful elocution, which, he declared, had given him the greatest pleasure.

But Mr. Croppy, alas! could not be persuaded to resume; and, after a few words from Mr. Goodwin on the matter, another elocutionary genius was called—Mr. Tidy—who was to favour us with that very rarely heard and little known effusion—"Hohenlinden."

Mr. Tidy coughed a great deal before he rose, for he was young and modest. At length, however, he made a bold rush for the front of the platform, stumbling in his passage over a leg of Mr. Goodwin's chair, and looking a little boiled lobster-coloured in the countenance. Having then got into position—that of a recruit standing at ease—he assured us, pointing straight at Mr. Coodle, who was nodding in peaceful slumber—

"On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,"
&c., &c., &c.

It did not take him long to finish; and nobody, as far as I could see, gave way to any untimely grief when he had concluded.

The next item in the programme was a song by a bass—very bass—singer—"The Rose of Tralee." If there be any virtue in strong lungs and an open mouth, he sang it admirably.

At any rate Mary, which was the name of the Rose, must have been a very nice kind of a girl, and I have nothing to say against her.

I need not enumerate, or further attempt to describe, the different features of the varied bill of fare. I must hasten on to the dénouement.

Mr. Goodwin considered it wise, ere he concluded the evening by devotion, to make a long speech—first, about himself and his congregation; second, about a debt which was still upon his manse, and which he appealed to the generosity of his audience to assist him to liquidate; and thirdly, about his present position as chairman of that happy, Christian, social meeting, over which he was so proud to preside.

In the latter part of his speech he alluded with some warmth to Mr. Coodle—the able, temperate, scholarlike, kind-hearted, benevolent, efficient teacher—here Mr. Coodle, whose head had been sinking lower and lower upon his breast for the last ten minutes, snored loudly—of the children of that exemplary parish, the like of which, he would venture to say, was hardly to be seen in the north, for quietness, industry, and Christian liberality, when their pastor called for their support, or, indeed, when any other chance of displaying their munificence occurred.

In conclusion, he had much pleasure in tendering his very best thanks, &c., &c. And as for Mr. Coodle, he was sure he was only expressing the feelings of them all when he said that they all wished him—here Mr. Coodle raised his head slightly, opened one eye, closed it again, and was about to resume his slumbers when he was shaken up by Bill, just in time to hear the last compliment—long life and every happiness that this world can bestow.

This speech was followed by three consecutive “hear, hears;” one rather spirited “bravo;” and one lingering, but well-meant, “it’s all right.”

Mr. Coodle, on being roused, scratched his head, looked about him, and addressed Bill as follows:—

“Eh, what! What was he sayin’, Billy? Wasn’t he talkin’ somethin’ about me?”

“Iv coorse he was, ye ungrateful owl cauliflower. He has been talkin’ about ye for the last half-hour; and he’s jist afther wishin’ ye long life an’ all the happiness that the airth can bestow.”

In an instant Mr. Coodle was on his legs. Bill tried to restrain him, but it was no use.

“Ahem, ahem!” said he—and immediately every eye was turned upon him—“Misther—a—Misther Chairman, ladies,

and gen’lemen,” he began, making strenuous and by no means unsuccessful endeavours to look profound. “I—a—I get up for the purpose—I might say, indeed, for the sole purpose of rising to thank the rev. gen’leman which I see before me on the platform, for the kind—perhaps I should say for the noble manner in which—a—I say in *which* he has just made allusion to me.”

“Bully, Misther Coodle,” from the far corner of the room.

“No one knows, no one *can* know, no one ever *will* know better than I do, the high state of education and Christianity which belongs to Mr. Goodwin and to his flock in general as well as in particular. I say, ladies and gen’lemen, and I challenge contradiction, that Misther Goodwin is a dacent man; and that all his family, from wee Tammy down to Miss Mary Ann over there, are emphatically—I say *emphatically*—the same. I have known him for now—howl’ on a bit—ten, five, goin’ to twenty years; and I can truly say that—a—I can truly say that I never, and I’m sure nobody else never, saw nothin’ in him but kindness, and goodness, and—a—neighbourliness to everybody round him. (A buzz of approbation.) Ladies and gen’lemen, it is not for me to say the prospect—the—a—advancement—the progress—the success—the éclat which has attended Misther Goodwin’s high public—a—career, as a preacher in this part of the country for the past—well, purty near forty years. I say it is not for me, and I repeat most distinctly, it is not for anybody here—I would say, indeed, that—a—(Quit pullin’ my coat-tails, Johnny)—(Johnny was one of the thirteen)—“that a—in fact, in all the course of my experience, I have never, at no time of my eventful life, saw a more successful, a more noble, a more glorious ministry; and that’s sayin’ a good deal. Now, ladies and gen’lemen, I feel that I must say—that it is only right for me to say—(If you do that again, Johnny, I’ll bate ye when I get you home)—that it is only right for me to say that during—a—during my time as a learned teacher—I mean a teacher of learnin’, in this ancient and honourable institution—for it *is* that, and, only the roof lets in, I wouldn’t change it for some of their bigger and better-lookin’ ones yet—well, I say, during my time in this ancient and honourable institution, I have always tried, always endeavoured—

(Will ye quit, Johnny?)—always desired to accomplish my duty as—a—as a teacher; and, in the words of the immortal bard, Milton—

'To teach the young idea how to grow.'

But, ladies and gentlemen, there's one thing that I *must* say—that I, in fact, cannot help sayin'. There's a great—a—great—a—commotion at the present time about what they call Irish University education. Well, now, d'ye know what I think, Misther Goodwin—augh, I mean Misther Chairman—an' ladies an' gen'lemen?" (A voice: "Not yit.") "I think if they would jist give as much attention to the education of the poorer classes as they do to the chaps that's able to enter colleges, it would be a deal better—I say a *deal* better—for the country. If they would get men of some learnin' an' talent—like myself—for the national schools, men qualified—like myself—to instruct and guide the children of the poorer classes, and pay them, or see them paid, decently for doin' it; if they would—(I tell ye again, Johnny, to quit pullin' my tails)—if they would give schoolmasters the life of men, and not of half beggars an' whole slaves; if they would—but what's the use of talkin'?" (Hear, hear.) Well—a—Misther Chairman, ladies an' gen'lemen, I'll not occupy—I say I'll not occupy your time sayin' any more; for, as the poet says, in language as touching as it is beautiful—

'What's the use of cryin' when time is on the wing?'"

With this, Mr. Coodle sat down, amid shouts of approbation.

The first thing he did on being seated was to box Johnny's ears.

"Ye young whelp, ye," said he, angrily, "I intended givin' ye a farden on your birthday; an' ye'll not get a bit of it now. How dar' ye pull my coat tails? Away home, an' get your ma to put ye to bed."

With a heavy heart at this multiplicity of punishments, Johnny, with an unsteadiness of the under-lip, turned away. Mr. Coodle then turned to Bill.

"Billy, my brave friend, Billy—have ye —a—have ye—"

"Out with it, Mr. Coodle."

"It doesn't matter, ye know, Billy; but —a—have ye the flask with ye?"

Bill had not the flask; but there was a public-house not far off, and he and Mr. Coodle disappeared miraculously when the

meeting was breaking up, and were missing for about ten minutes. I don't think they were getting up a subscription for Mr. Goodwin's manse.

DOCTOR MIDDLETON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A DESPERATE CHARACTER."

CHAPTER III.

YES, on the whole, the room was satisfactory.

I had never been accustomed to a superabundance of luxuries; and, doubtless, it was quite as well that I had not. Had I looked for many in my new abode, I most undoubtedly should have been severely disappointed.

Still, as I have said, the room was very well.

It was large.

The window had a balcony, which, thought I, will do admirably for flowers; and I subsequently made quite a pretty, if miniature, garden on it.

The aspect was southerly—the best I could have had for my birds.

So far so well. There was a fireplace in the room, and there was a large press let into the wall beside it.

A small iron bedstead, with a palliasse, and one not very thick mattress, made me a more comfortable couch than I had often lain on in the bush. I had my own sheets and blankets.

Two cane-bottomed chairs were more than I required.

The dressing-table, when the looking-glass was taken off and laid on the bed, did nicely for writing on.

There was a washstand, of course, with its usual accompaniments; also a towel-horse, as it is called.

The only carpet, with the exception of a dilapidated hearth rug, was a narrow strip of drugget beside the bed.

On the whole, I might have found worse quarters.

After I had unpacked, and disposed my possessions in the most advantageous manner about the room, I looked at my watch, and found it was nearly six o'clock; and having dressed, waited some time for the dinner bell to ring.

Presently I heard footsteps on the stairs; doors were opened and shut: evidently the inmates were returning.

I had better go down to the sitting-room, I thought; it would be less awkward than meeting the whole company together for the first time at dinner.

To my astonishment, I found the table laid in what I had supposed to be the drawing-room.

The proprietresses, as Mr. Cornell called them, and a short, stout, very Celtic-looking gentleman, with a very bald head, and a glass stuck in one eye, were the only occupants of the room on my entrance.

"Come near the fire."

It was the lady with the chenille net who spoke; and seeing it was early in the year, and that the weather was cold, I very gladly obeyed.

The ladies and I began to talk—what about I forget, but nothing of any consequence, I dare say. The bald gentleman did not speak; but, when he thought I was not looking, scanned me narrowly through his eyeglass.

Presently Mr. Cornell came in. I stood up to greet him. We shook hands. I saw he did not recollect me.

"You know Mr. Thorowgood, Mr. Cornell?"

"Yes, I have that pleasure."

"I am his nephew."

"Oh, ah! to be sure; yes—of course—I remember. Well, you have got settled?"

"Pretty nearly so, at all events."

"Hem! Cold evening this, Miss Fernley," continued the old gentleman, rubbing his hands, and addressing the lady with the ringlets. "And how do you do, Miss Matilda?" to the other.

So, then, the proprietresses were sisters, it appeared: she with the curls was the elder, and the lady with the chenille net and the short sight—when reading she held her book so that her nose rubbed against the page, and formed, very often, a running accompaniment to the text—was Miss Matilda.

Presently, this lady addressed the bald-headed gentleman by the title of "Counsellor," requesting his opinion relative to some statement which I forget, made by some one whom I do not remember.

So the stout Celt was a counsellor, was he? Whom did he benefit by his advice, and where, I wondered.

Afterwards, I learned that he was a bar-rister, and his title, Briefless; and, furthermore, that he was engaged in writing a history of English poetry—unhappy man!

The next arrival was about the thinnest man I have ever seen in my life, and yet he did not seem to be in ill-health. I felt sure that, were he stripped, I should have been able to demonstrate every one of his bones as easily as I could those of the College skeleton.

I do not think he could possibly have been thinner.

In height he was above the average, verging on six feet; but he looked even taller, owing to his extreme attenuation.

He had dark gray eyes, with a restless, uneasy, wavering expression in them.

His nose was aquiline, and too large for his face.

His mouth was wide; the upper lip edged with a thin reddish-brown moustache, which, when he spoke, did not hide teeth too large, white, and regular to be natural.

His hair was short, thick, and inclined to curl: it was a dark brown, while his beard and whiskers were almost black.

His complexion was very pale, but not ghastly.

He was dressed in a semi-clerical suit of black, showing a small turn-down shirt collar; cuffs he either did not wear, or they were invisible.

I judged him to be about thirty, but subsequently found he was two years younger.

I can safely say he was the most remarkable-looking man I had ever seen.

Miss Matilda made room for him at the fire, and addressed him as Mr. Woodward. He replied in a shrill and disagreeable treble.

"What a horrible man you are!" was the judgment I mentally passed upon him; but Miss Matilda was evidently of a different opinion.

He took no notice of me—did not even seem to remark that there was a stranger in the room; nor did he speak to any one unless spoken to.

"You are as disagreeable as you are ugly," I thought to myself. "Thank goodness, I shall not have much to do with you."

The next comers were three commonplace young men, clerks in offices in the city. No one would ever have turned round to look at any one of them in a crowd.

Soon after their entrance, Ann the untidy brought up the dinner.

Miss Fernley took her seat at the head of the table, muttered an inarticulate "grace,"

and addressing her sister, who sat opposite to her, said—

"I suppose Miss Sharman is not in?"

"Yes, she is," replied one of the clerks.

"I heard her in her room."

"What a strange person she is!" remarked Mr. Cornell.

"Very," observed another clerk, glancing at his fellow, who looked across the table at Mr. Woodward, who was intent upon his plate.

"Strange or not," spoke up Miss Matilda, addressing herself to me, who sat next to her, "she is a very nice little lady, and has three hundred a year of her own."

"Indeed?" I replied.

Further comment was rendered impossible by the entrance of the lady herself, whose appearance fully justified the correctness of the epithet applied to her by Mr. Cornell, and which Miss Matilda had good-naturedly called in question.

I think the word "squat" will convey a more adequate idea of her figure than any other with which I am acquainted; for she was very short and very stout, and appeared to be of one size from her shoulders down.

Her forehead was low, and her eyes deep-set; of nose she had next to none, but that little was of a decidedly aspiring character; her complexion was carmine, and her hair of that conspicuous colour partial friends are apt to call auburn: she wore it in bands pressed close to her cheeks, and gathered the rest in a net at the back of her head—for I write of an age long antecedent to the invention of chignons.

"You are late to-day, Miss Sharman," blandly observed Miss Fernley, as the little lady sat down in a vacant chair between Messieurs Cornell and Woodward.

"Am I?"

"Matilda, please ring for Ann to bring up Miss Sharman's steak."

I started up to save poor Miss Matilda, rang the bell, and was rewarded by a gracious smile.

The clerks grinned.

Mr. Cornell blew his nose demonstratively.

Clearly, politeness was a quality that went a-begging in that house.

Ann presently reappeared, carrying a small, covered dish, which she set down before the lady boarder with a bang.

Miss Sharman immediately transferred

its contents to her plate, dropping some of the red gravy on the cloth.

"I hope your dinner is to your liking to-day, Miss Sharman?" asked the lady of the house.

"Yes," was the reply, spoken with a mouth full. "That's the way I like mate to be dun."

Now the steak was absolutely raw. I am positive it had not even been warmed through; and that little fat, red-faced cannibal was bolting it in blocks, without chewing!

"Goodness! what a queer lot of people I have got among!" thought I.

Dinner over, some of the inmates retired to their rooms to smoke or drink punch, as the case might be. Those who remained, at Miss Fernley's invitation gathered round the fire.

It was Saturday night, so I stayed awhile in order to make acquaintance with my fellow-boarders.

"Are we going to have a rubber, Miss Matilda?" presently asked Mr. Woodward of that lady; who, for answer, produced a pack of worn cards from her workbox.

"Do you play?" This to me.

"No, thank you," I replied. Whereupon the two ladies and Messieurs Woodward and Cornell sat down to their game.

Miss Sharman and I were left by the fire—one on each side. I was always fond of animals; and not caring to address myself to "the nice little lady," to whom I had not been introduced, I chirruped to a large cat that was lying on the hearth-rug between us, "Psh, psh, psh," and the creature responded to my invitation by jumping up on my lap.

"That's a bad sign!" exclaimed Miss Sharman, with a suddenness that made me start. "That's a bad sign, Mr. What's-your-name."

"What is, madam?"

"Sure, you'll be an ould bachelor."

"Really, I do not understand."

"Why, the cat, to be sure! Don't you know that them as cats and dogs go to are safe to be ould bachelors and ould maids? I wouldn't let one of them near me for the world."

Mr. Woodward insists upon it that I blushed furiously upon hearing this extraordinary address. I doubt the fact myself; but am free to confess that I felt confused, and muttered an inarticulate reply.

"You don't believe me," continued the lady, not interrogatively, but dogmatically.

"Pardon me," I replied, "I have not said so; but it is a subject upon which I have not happened to bestow any attention. Possibly I may do so now."

"Oh, very fine, to be sure! When it's too late, and you're an ould man, like Mr. Cornell there."

I was astounded; but no one else seemed to take any notice. Mr. Woodward, indeed, laughed a little, short, mocking laugh; but whether at the lady's remark or some victory he had won, I could not be certain.

Soon afterwards Miss Matilda made a mistake, which called down upon her the wrath of her partner, Mr. Woodward, who administered a sharp rebuke, which she took very good-humouredly.

I cannot say what the nature of the mistake was, as I know nothing of cards; but it seemed that in consequence of it the game was lost, a circumstance which appeared to anger Miss Matilda's partner exceedingly, and exposed that lady to another scolding; after which Mr. Woodward left the room abruptly, shutting the door after him in much too demonstrative a manner, as I thought.

The lady surreptitiously wiped her eyes, and resumed the reading of her "Parlour Library."

"Mr. Woodward is not in good humour to-night," remarked Mr. Cornell, helping himself, as he spoke, to a pinch of snuff from an old-fashioned silver snuff box.

"So it seems," replied Miss Fernley. "I wonder what can have put him out?"

Miss Matilda sighed.

"He's a horrid man. I hate him!" said Miss Sharman, viciously.

Mr. Cornell had once more recourse to his pocket handkerchief, and blew his nose with such vigour that I felt half afraid he would blow it away altogether.

Soon afterwards tea was brought in and partaken of by those who were present.

The tea pot was then covered over, and placed in the fender, much to my astonishment. I afterwards found out that it was in order to keep the contents warm for the clerks and other absentees.

As it was ten o'clock, I slipped away quietly and went to bed, on the whole rather amused with my first experience of Carlton-terrace.

It was a great contrast to, and yet strongly

reminded me of, the Railway Boarding House, where I once lodged for a short time, at Castlemaine.

There was an Irishman there, who in figure and accent was so forcibly recalled to my recollection by the nice little lady with three hundred a year of her own, that I could not help thinking he might be her half-brother or cousin; in fact, only his name was Gorman, I should have said he was her father's son; but I dare say they were not in any way related.

I don't think my cockatoo liked the change of residence; or perhaps he did not appreciate living in a bed-room, for he woke me next morning at daybreak by a horrible screeching, and loud cries of "Help! master, help!"

I jumped out of bed in a hurry, fancying the cat had got hold of him; although, as soon as I knew there was an animal of that species in the house, I hung my birds up near the ceiling. But, no—the door was closed; puss was not in the room; so I scolded the bird, and got into bed again.

Presently the shrieks were repeated. Surely Coco never made a noise like that?—a compound of whistle, shriek, and groan.

The bird was frightened by it, too. What could it be?

It soon ceased, however, and did not recur again that morning.

At breakfast one of the clerks, addressing his fellow, asked—

"Did you hear the ghost this morning, Bill?"

Bill winked. "Rather," said he. "Did you?"

"I should think so."

"What ghost?" demanded Miss Sharman.

"The ghost of the old man who hung himself upstairs," replied the clerk, who was called Bill, again winking at his fellow.

"Dear me!" ejaculated the lady, passing her right hand over her face and neck in a rapid and, to me, mysterious manner.

"Don't be talking nonsense, now," remonstrated Miss Fernley, speaking to the clerks, "or you'll frighten that gentleman," pointing at me with her chin.

"Not at all," I replied; "we don't believe in such things as ghosts out in Australia."

"What do you know about Australia?" suddenly exclaimed Mr. Woodward, who sat at the opposite side of the table, looking up at me for an instant, and as quickly dropping his eyes upon his cup.

"It is my native country."

"You don't say so—really?"

His face kindled for a moment, and then assumed a death-like pallor.

"Have you been there?" I asked, quite interested.

"I? Yes," he admitted—reluctantly, as I thought.

"What part?" I further inquired.

"Melbourne—Victoria generally."

"I am one of the first-born of the colony," said I.

"Indeed."

Here Mr. Woodward got up from the table, and left the room.

"It is rather a sore subject with him," observed Miss Fernley, looking across at me.

"Is it?"

"Yes. I fancy he has had some disappointment there."

"Poor fellow," sighed Miss Matilda.

"A love affair?" inquired one of the clerks.

"So I should say," replied Miss Fernley.

"Of course I never asked him."

"Poor fellow!" again sighed Miss Matilda.

"I don't see what you've got to pity him for, Miss Matilda," coarsely observed the clerk who was called Bill. "I only wish I was as well off, that's all; you wouldn't see a jollier cove than me then, from this to Queenstown."

"As if money was all!" exclaimed Miss Matilda, with a sigh. "As if money could compensate for the loss of a responsive heart!"

"I say, Bill," said the other clerk to his companion, "don't you feel melancholy?"

"Rather," replied Bill; "and I vote we absquatulate before highstrikes set in."

Whereupon the pair—they had finished their breakfast—retired to their own room.

The third clerk had not yet made his appearance.

"Is Mr. Woodward rich?" I ventured to inquire of Miss Fernley.

"I don't know about 'rich,' Mr.——"

"Cochrane."

"Thank you—Mr. Cochrane; I don't know about 'rich,' but, from different things I have heard him say, I should imagine he was comfortably off."

By the way, poor Miss Fernley's views of comfort were of the most restricted kind.

"He has lost money since he came home,

I know," said Miss Matilda; "for he has told me so."

"How close you are!" sneered the sister.

Miss Matilda made an angry retort; but I hastened to interpose.

"May I trouble you for some more tea, Miss Fernley?" And so the storm was stayed.

Mr. Woodward did not appear at dinner that day; neither did Mr. Cornell, or the barrister.

We were also deprived of the pleasure of the charming Miss Sharman's company, who on Sundays devoured her raw meat at her brother's, at Howth.

The three clerks were very merry, after their fashion, cracking stale jokes and tripping one another up in their talk.

The Misses Fernley tried to make themselves agreeable, poor things! and laughed, or pretended to laugh, at these gentlemen's witticisms.

"What church have you been to?" presently demanded Miss Matilda, addressing herself to me.

"I never go to church."

"Oh!" in much surprise.

"What a 'eathen!" remarked the clerk called Bill, in an undertone to his friend, and affecting to speak with a Cockney accent.

"Shocking!" replied the friend.

"I never go to church, Miss Matilda," I continued, "because I am a Dissenter, and always go to chapel."

"A Methodist for a million," sneered clerk number three, in a low voice—nevertheless perfectly audible, though not intended for my ear.

"Yes," I replied, looking him straight in the face—"a Methodist, sir."

"I'm sure I beg your pardon," said the clerk, looking confused. "I meant no harm; I'm a Presbyterian myself."

This observation called for no reply, and I made none; but, as if nothing had passed, held out my plate to Miss Matilda.

"May I trouble you for a potato?"

"Have you potatoes out in Australia?" demanded the clerk whose companion called him Bill.

I could not resist the temptation of answering him in his own language and accent—"Rather."

His companion nudged him with his elbow; but nothing more was said.

Decidedly, I did not like the clerks—the

one with the red head especially; and yet how erroneous and little to be relied on are first impressions, for we all grew friends before the week was out, and they were not bad fellows—any of them—by any means.

Boys at school, soldiers in a barrack, fowls in a farmyard, even birds in a cage—and why not the established inmates of a cheap boarding-house?—invariably do their best to torture a new comer.

Next morning, the "ghost" wailed in my room louder than before. His voice proceeded from the corner of the room nearest the door. The cause I could not detect.

At breakfast, the clerks again spoke about "the old man who hung himself upstairs," and asked one another if they had not heard him.

"I always understood," said I, "that ghosts appeared at night; but this one seems to prefer daylight."

"Irish ghosts," mendaciously replied one of the clerks, "always do."

"It is curious," said I, "that his wails correspond with the opening and shutting of the street door."

"It's a gone case, Bill," remarked the clerk to his companion, aside. Then to me—"You've found it out, Mr. Cochrane, sir."

I had not—quite; but I did not choose to say so, and merely nodded my head slightly, leaving the clerk to interpret the sign as he pleased.

Mr. Woodward did not come down to breakfast that morning—at least, not while I was in the room.

At dinner, also, his chair remained unoccupied.

"Do you know," presently observed Miss Fernley, addressing the company in general, "that we are going to lose Mr. Woodward?"

I involuntarily glanced at Miss Matilda on receipt of this intelligence.

Her eyes were intently fixed upon her plate; but I could see that her lip quivered.

Poor Miss Matilda!

The news did not seem to painfully affect any one else at table; in fact, Miss Sharman openly expressed her satisfaction.

Thereupon Miss Matilda bristled up.

"I'm sure he is a very nice, quiet, gentlemanly young man, Miss Sharman."

"Especially when he is abusing you for

revoking, or trumping his king," retorted the little lady.

"Hem, hem!" very opportunely coughed Mr. Cornell.

The interruption was timely and successful; for it was easy to see, by both the ladies' eyes, that we were on the eve of a pitched battle between them. Indeed, one of the clerks had already begun to make the sibilant sound used by costermongers and people of that class when urging two dogs to fight. But Mr. Cornell's opportune fit of coughing served to divert their thoughts.

"What disagreeable, vulgar fellows these are," thought I, referring to the clerks.

"Did he tell you why he was leaving?" I then asked Miss Fernley, thinking that I myself was perhaps the cause.

"No, Mr. Cochrane, he did not; he only said he was going away next week, as he did not feel very well, and in the meantime would take his meals in his own room."

"Poor fellow!" once more sighed Miss Matilda.

"It's my firm opinion," declared the clerk who was called Bill, "that he's a stark, staring, raving madman, is that same Mr. Woodward."

Miss Matilda was once more rushing to the rescue, when Mr. Cornell took up the parable, and said—

"He certainly is peculiar."

A dictum which, coming from the patriarch of the party, was not to be disputed.

"Ah!" sighed Miss Matilda, "it was only the other day he said he was so comfortable, he thought he should never leave us."

"How truly affecting!" said the clerk who answered to the name of Bill.

"Werry," returned his companion, in his odious assumed Cockney accent.

In the evening, however, it was renewed by one of the three asking Miss Fernley whether she had sent up "that madman's tea," meaning Mr. Woodward's.

"Mr. Woodward is no more mad than you are," cried Miss Matilda, with energy; "and you know very well you would not dare to say so if he was here."

The clerk coloured, and was about to reply; but Miss Matilda continued—

"Yes, it is a shame. You know he is ill, and—" Here she broke down, and fairly sobbed.

The clerk looked silly, and the Nestor of the party, Mr. Cornell, as usual, interfered; and calm was shortly restored.

Ann the untidy here made her appearance, and whispered something to Miss Fernley, who rose, and followed her out of the room.

After a couple of minutes or so she returned, and beckoning to me from the door, said, in a high tragedy whisper—

"Mr. Cochrane, I want you."

When I had joined her, she continued—

"Mr. Woodward is very ill, and as you are a medical man, I thought, perhaps, you might be able to tell us what ought to be done."

"Dear me!" I exclaimed, "I fear I can be of no use, Miss Fernley, for I am but a tyro. However, I'll do what I can."

"Thank you. He wished me to ask you to see him. I believe he has taken poison!"

"Good gracious!"

I sprang up the stairs, leaving Miss Fernley to follow at her leisure, and rushed into the sick man's room.

Mr. Woodward was sitting up in bed, looking ghastly.

"A little accident, mate," he said, as I came in.

It was a style of address I was not accustomed to, and the words as well as the tone in which they were spoken jarred on my ear somewhat.

"A little accident, mate."

He spoke thick, as if he had something in his mouth, and so he had.

It seemed he had a cold, or thought he had, for he was a veritable hypochondriac, and had got a draught and a small bottle of liniment from the chemist; and had, unfortunately, taken the latter instead of the former.

His mouth was badly scalded; but happily he had not swallowed any of the embrocation, and his throat had escaped.

"What am I to do, mate?"

"What have you taken?"

"Hartshorn."

I had sufficient medical knowledge to be aware that an acid was the best antidote for an alkali, and immediately called out to Miss Fernley, who had rejoined us, for "vinegar."

"Anne, run for the cruet-stand!" cried the lady to her servant.

Anne hurried off, and Miss Fernley followed.

"Mr. Woodward has taken poison!"

"He has tried to commit suicide!" "Didn't I tell you he was as mad as a March hare?"

&c., &c. Such were the comments of his fellow-boarders upon hearing the news.

Poor Miss Matilda went into violent hysterics on the stairs, where she was supported by Mr. Cornell and the barrister.

The three clerks rushed into the invalid's room—

"What's the matter? Can I do anything?"—all three speaking together.

"No," said I, "nothing. Please do not crowd the room."

I have no doubt they thought me very rude; but their roughness annoyed me. Moreover, Mr. Woodward began to swear fearfully, in an undertone; and nothing so puts me out as hearing profane language.

I was scandalized, too; for Miss Matilda had told me he was preparing for the Church, and was such a good young man.

Nevertheless, he swore awfully.

"Hush!" I said, as the clerks somewhat precipitately left the room—"hush! don't go on like that, Mr. Woodward, you make me shiver; besides, what good can it do? And remember you will have to give an account of this some day."

"Bosh!" replied Mr. Woodward. "I hate preaching—my hatred of it has lost me a fortune. I should have been a millionaire now if I could have put up with my partner's canting humbug."

Every second word of the above speech was an oath or an execration.

I saw the man was excited, and fancied he had been drinking spirits; and, afraid of still further irritating him, I merely said—

"Hush, you are easier now, at all events; and though your tongue and mouth will be sore enough for some days, there is no serious damage done. It might have been much worse."

His answer was another dreadful execration; so I hastily wished him good night, and went downstairs.

There was much curiosity expressed in the dining-room about my patient, as they called him, which I did not choose to gratify; and after finishing my tea, which Mr. Woodward's mishap had interrupted, I went to my rooms, where I read for a couple of hours, and then looked in at the invalid, who was either asleep or pretended to be. So I left him to his repose, wishing him a better temper and more resignation to the dispensations of Providence—or, as some would say, more patience.

Next morning I found Mr. Woodward

much better, and, at his request, sat with him for an hour.

During the course of our conversation, which naturally ran upon Australia, he said—

"I don't know how it is, mate, but I feel in a kind of way attracted to you, as I have never been to any one before."

I was conscious of something of the same kind myself, and wanting opportunity to analyze my feelings, hazarded the reply—

"Perhaps it is the bond of a common country," which doubtless was the case.

"Perhaps so," he replied; "and yet I am not a native. I spent seven years in the colony, that is all."

"Did you like the country?"

"Well, yes—on 'the whole, I did well enough; but it is a rough place."

"No doubt it has its rough aspects, like this country; but it has plenty of smooth, too. It all depends upon what medium you view it through."

"Possibly; but we sha'n't dispute about that, mate."

"I wish you would not use that inexpressibly odious word."

"What word, mate?"

"Why, the word you have just spoken—'mate;' to my ear, it is repulsive in the extreme."

"Dear me. I thought it was the accepted colonial equivalent for 'sir.'"

I shook my head.

"I am sure you know better than that; no colonial gentleman would ever dream of using it."

"Well, well, I must drop it. I have too few acquaintances, not to speak of friends, to afford running the risk of losing one for the sake of a word"—winding up with an oath.

"My dear sir," said I, "if we are to remain on speaking terms, you must also break off, what seems to be a habit with you, the use of bad language. I have never been accustomed to listen to it, and shall not now begin."

"Well, well—I am an unfortunate wretch, I know; but I ought to be a gentleman, so I beg your pardon."

"That's a good fellow," I replied, as I shook hands with him; "but don't trust too much to your own strength of resolution: look higher than that. You know what I mean."

He winced, but gave me no answer.

After that we grew to be very good friends, even calling each other by our Christian names.

TABLE TALK.

THE oyster season of 1872-3 lasted rather longer than usual, running into the first fortnight in May. The oysters were never better in flavour than at the end of the season, and so the old proverb about the oyster only being good when there is an *r* in the month is not always true. The oyster season in London begins on the 5th of August and ends about the 7th of May; though the fish is seldom good until October, unless September happens to be unusually cold. The origin of the proverb about the *r* in the month must have been in the observation of some ancient epicure that during four certain months in the year, in the spelling of which no *r* occurs, and which happened to be consecutive, oysters are not in season. In England, however, oysters that are quite eatable may be got in the summer. They are large and coarse, and are obtained on the south-east coast. They are known as "summer oysters." Their flavour is really not amiss. The law regulates the season of oysters—2 George II.—and was made, of course, without regard to epicurean reasons, but to protect the fish during the breeding season. In the time of Charles I.—and possibly long before—an oath was administered by the admiral of the seaports to his official, thus:—"Also be it enquired of thaim that draggen or muskles oute of season; that is t' under-stande, from the begynnyng of the moneth of Maye unto the day of Thexaltacon of the Holy Crosse." So oysters have long been held in esteem in these islands, as they were by Greek and Roman *bons-vivants* in times of remote antiquity; being always considered, probably, by the descendants of the lucky man who first discovered their flavour in a moonlight walk on the sea-shore, a high delicacy, and worthy, as Christopher North puts it, "to be lapped from the briny board by the lambent tongue of Neptune himself."

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PART II.—AT HOME.

CHAPTER XLIV.



"MY dearest daughter"—it was the last letter, the one letter, that Laura ever had from Marie—"I send you Philip's last words. It is all over, my child. I cannot write about him yet. But he kissed me at the last, and we prayed together. I have given money to a man, who promises to keep his grave, and to tend the flowers that I have planted. There is a cross at its head, with his initials, and a line that I found in his desk—'He dared not: therefore failed.' It is the story of his life—a poor life, a sinful life, a sorrowful life. He saw what was good, and took what was bad, because it seemed the easiest. In all his faults, he tried to make a compromise between the two. My poor boy! He looked so handsome, though he was pale and worn at the last; and, as he lay dead, his mouth was set with a sweeter smile than I had ever seen on it in life. Alas! I never saw him smile. I love to think of him so; and to feel that he is with One who is far more merciful than we two women.

"I am delayed by all this business, but I return by the next mail.

"Strange presentiments fall upon me. I cannot sleep at night. If I do, I have dreams and visions. And I feel as if I shall never see you again. But I am not unhappy. God has forgiven us both—my boy and me. I say that again and again; and I comfort myself with thinking how my Philip laid his arms about my neck, and kissed me, at the end.

"One thing I forgot to tell you. You are now the owner of Fontainebleau. You must give it back to Arthur. Make him take it. What is mine is yours, and I am rich. Should I never reach England, all is bequeathed to you.

"I enclose you a lock of Philip's hair. I cut it from his head when I took my last look at his poor, white, dead face. I put up one of mine with it. Tie them up together, dear child, and put them in a locket. Here, too, is a flower from his grave. And, with it all, his last letter. God bless you, my daughter. Perhaps my forebodings may come to nothing.

"MARIE."

A wild day off the Cape, where the gales are fiercer and the waves longer than in any other part of the ocean. In the midst of the warring winds and mighty waves a gallant ship, tossing and groaning as every successive mountain of gray-green water strikes her. The sailors are holding on by the ropes, the man at the helm is lashed to his post, the captain is giving orders clinging to the davits, and all the passengers, except two or three who are on deck and watching the waves, are below in the saloon. The storm has raged without intermission for three days. They have been driven steadily south, far out of the track of any ship. It is bitterly cold. The men have been all day trying to get up cargo and lighten the vessel. The engines labour heavily. Every

now and then the screw, as the ship's stern is lifted out of the water, whizzes round against the air, with a sound that seems to terrify the ship; for she gives a shiver, and then makes another bound forwards, and gallantly tries to right herself. Now and again a passenger tries to get hold of the captain or one of the officers, and essays to find a crumb of comfort in the assurance that things cannot get worse, and therefore must change soon; but the officers wear anxious faces, and the captain shakes his head when he talks to his chief. Hour after hour goes on, and things get worse: the wind higher, the waves longer. One after the other the passengers creep below into the saloon, and try to cheer each other, with a sickening fear at their hearts. Marie is there, sitting with clasped hands, and calm face, and downcast eyes. The women around her are crying and weeping; the men are sitting with haggard faces, or sometimes looking at each other with a smile; and the storm grows worse. Presently she feels a hand catching at her arm. It is a young girl, going to England to be married. She had not spoken to Marie before. Now, in her misery, she looks round, and finds hers the only face with any courage upon it. Marie rouses herself at the touch, and takes the girl into her arms.

"My poor child," she whispers.

And at the sound of her pitying voice, the girl breaks into a flood of weeping and lamentation.

"Madame de Guyon," she cries, "do you think we are going to be drowned?"

"I don't know, my dear. God knows. He will send us what is best for us."

"Pray for us, Madame de Guyon."

Marie prayed—whispering her prayer in the girl's ear. The storm grew louder and fiercer. She had to cling to the back of the saloon seat on which she was resting, and in the middle of her prayer an awful crash was heard. The child—she was little more—shrieked with terror. Marie clasped her the more firmly.

"God, our Father," she whispered, "send us what is best for us."

There was a great stamping and noise upon deck, for the mainmast had been carried by the board; but it was finally cleared away; and presently more noise befell them when the foremast followed. Those in the cabin trembled and shrieked. One or two of the men got brandy, and drank

freely to keep up their courage. Four ex-diggers from California sat down to have a final gamble, and, holding the cards firmly in one hand and the brandy in the other, prepared themselves so to leave the world.

But the end was not yet. This was the forenoon. The wind abated towards one o'clock, and there seemed a prospect, however distant, of getting through. The diggers gave up their gambling, and grumbled, being half drunk, over the winnings and losings. Those who had been most terrified assumed an air of valour, and the women left off crying. Only the girl clung to Marie, and begged her not to leave her again. The long day crept on. About five, a pretence was made at dinner—whatever could be found to eat being put out. But by this time a good many of the men were drunk, and lying helpless about the seats on the floor; and the women could not eat. The captain came down—a cheery, hearty man. He looked with infinite disgust at his drunken passengers, and hastened to say a few words to Marie and the young lady.

"You seem brave, Madame de Guyon," he whispered; "and so I tell you that, though we may pull through, I do not think we shall. If the wind rises again to-night, we shall have a rough time of it. Cheer up, my pretty," he said to the girl, "we must hope for the best. And here's the doctor to look after you. He can save us from a good deal, if not from storm and tempest. As for storm and tempest," he muttered, "only the Lord can save us from those; and I don't think the Lord will."

Then the doctor—a young fellow of five and twenty, as brave as if he had fifty lives—sat down and talked to them, making a rough dinner all the while, and trying to cheer up the poor lassie; but without much effect. Presently the sun set—or, rather, the night fell—and darkness came upon them. The stewardess lit one or two of the saloon lamps, and relapsed into a sort of torpor which had fallen upon her. The doctor tried to rouse her up. It was no use. She lifted up her head, and moaned—

"I've been a great sinner—oh! I've been a great sinner!"

"Well, come," said the doctor, kindly—"we all know that, of course; but you might as well do your duty all the same."

But she refused to move. So the doctor

tried himself to minister to his two ladies, without much effect. Indeed, there was little to be done for them.

Marie raised her head, and listened. Then she whispered to the doctor—

"The wind is rising—I feel it coming."

The doctor shuddered. He could distinguish nothing beyond the dull roar of the waves and the struggling of the ship, for the wind had almost died away. But he listened intently. Presently it came—first a shrill whistle in the shrouds, and then a sort of heavy, dull blow to starboard; and the good ship staggered and reeled.

"God help us!" said the doctor, softly.

"We shall not get through this night."

Marie and the girl clung to each other.

"I shall go on deck," said the doctor.

"Come below," said Marie, "if there is time."

He nodded, and went out into the black, howling night.

"Madame," said the girl.

"Call me Marie, dear."

"Marie—call me Lucy. If there were only a clergyman."

"Let me be your clergyman, dear Lucy. God hears us in the storm as much as in the calm. We want no clergyman."

"But—but—oh! I loved him so much—more than God! Do you think He will forgive me? Marie, do you think I can be forgiven?"

"God forgives us all," said Marie. "He has forgiven me. And God has taken my son, and is going to take me. He has forgiven us both—me and my boy, too. Do you not think he will forgive you?"

"Pray for me again," sobbed the girl.

Marie prayed. Two or three of the women—they were soldiers' wives, poor things, second-class passengers, who had crept aft for better shelter—seeing the girl on her knees, and Marie bending over her, slid and crawled over to her, and knelt round her, while Marie prayed for all.

In the midst of her prayer there was a confused rush and gurgle of waters, and the ship seemed suddenly to stop. In the roar of the tempest, they hardly perceived that it was her engines which had stopped. And Marie, looking up, saw the doctor making his way towards her. Catching one of the iron pillars of the saloon, he bent over, and whispered in her ear—

"The ship will be down in ten minutes."

She nodded, and drew from her breast a

little packet, which she handed him. He put it in his pocket; and then, with tears in his eyes, kissed her upturned face, and disappeared up the companion ladder. None of the women noticed it.

Ten minutes afterwards, he found himself clinging to a rope on the deck. Next to him was the chief officer.

"Where's the skipper?" he shouted through the storm.

"Gone overboard. All the rest, too, I think, with the almighty wave that put out our engine fires. Doctor, don't be drowned like a heathen. Say you didn't mean what you said the other night."

"Not I," shouted the doctor. "If I've been wrong, and there is something to come, I won't go sneaking into it with a miserable apology."

The chief officer said no more; because at that moment another wave, striking the ship, washed them both off together into the black sea.

The doctor, recovering his senses, found himself clinging to some portion of the wreck. How he got hold of it, by what instinct, how in the crash and roar when his senses left him he still managed to hold to it, he never knew. It was a black night, and he was alone on the waves. He looked round, but could see nothing.

The morning found him still living. The storm had subsided, and the sun broke fair and warm.

Two days afterwards, a homeward-bound ship saw an object tossing on the sea, and made out that it was a man and a piece of wreck. They lowered a boat. The man was breathing, but that was all. They took him on board and gave him restoratives. He came to his senses presently, and told his story. And the doctor was the only survivor of the ship. The captain and the crew, Marie and little Lucy, and the passengers, had all gone down together. When they touched at Plymouth, the doctor landed and went straight to Venn with the packet that Marie had put into his hands. It contained nothing but a few memorials of Philip.

Laura had lost her husband and her mother.

CHAPTER XLV.

L AURA continued to stay with Sukey. She made no new friends, and no change in her life. Hartley came to see her nearly every day, and the old daily visit was so

restored, with the difference that he was the scholar.

All her beauty had come back to her: roses to her cheeks, the life and lightness of youth, the sweetness and grace, doubled and trebled by the lessons of sorrow, with that additional charm for which we have no other word than ladyhood.

All were happy, except Sukey, who watched her brother day after day, with feelings growing more and more irritated. At last she spoke. He was in a particularly good temper that morning. Laura was in her own room, dressing to go out with him.

"It's ridiculous, Hartley," cried Sukey, losing all control over herself.

"What is ridiculous, Sukey?"

"I say it is ridiculous, the way you are going on. How long is it to last? And people talking. Even Anne says it's too bad of you."

"My own Sukey, what is it?"

"It's Laura. Has the man got eyes in his head? Are you stupid? Are you blind?" Hartley turned red.

"Tell me, Sukey—speak plain. Tell me what it is you mean?"

"Oh, Hartley! You are the most foolish creature that ever was, my dear brother." She laughed hysterically. "The child loves the very ground you walk upon. She dreams of you—she is never happy except with you."

"Don't, Sukey, don't—" He began walking about the room. "If you should be wrong. Am I to lose the happiness I have every day?"

"Lose it! And a second time, this nonsense! I haven't patience with the man. While the prettiest and best girl in the world is dying of love for him, he talks about losing happiness!"

"Go send her here, Sukey, dear. It's true our grandfather was a bishop, and hers was a Gray's Inn laundress—no, that was her grandmother."

He looked at her with a smile playing about his lips.

"It may be remarkable, Hartley," said Sukey, "to quote yourself, but it is true, that in our family there are two grandfathers, one of whom was not unconnected with the wholesale"—here she made a wry face—"the wholesale glue trade."

"Go away, Sukey," he laughed, giving her that very unusual thing from him, a kiss. He had never, by the way, been very frugal

over his kisses for little Lollie, in the old time. "Go away, and send me my little girl."

She came, dancing down the stairs and singing, ready for her walk, in a dainty little costume, all her own invention, and bringing the sunshine into the room with her.

"Here I am, Mr. Venn. Are you impatient? I have only been ten minutes. Where shall we go?"

"I am always impatient, Lollie." He took her hand, and held it for a moment in his. "Child, I am more than impatient. I am discontented. You give me all the joy I have in life. But you withhold some—the greatest."

She began to tremble, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Give me the greatest, my darling. Never to be separated from you—to have you always with me. Give me the right to take you in my arms, as I used to do when you were a little child. Be my wife, Lollie."

She looked in his face. The eyes were smiling—the face was grave. No wild tempestuous passion such as she might have remembered, only that memory seemed all dead. No fierce light of a burning fire in those eyes—only the light of a full, deep love which nothing could destroy.

She threw her arms round his neck, and laid her cheek to his.

"Mr. Venn—Mr. Venn, I have never loved anybody but you."

What could he say? There was nothing to say. Five minutes afterwards, Sukey, hearing no voice, opened the door. They were still standing in that same posture, kissing each other, as Sukey afterwards told Anne, "like a pair of babies."

"My dearest," said Sukey, "I have always prayed for this from the very beginning. Hartley, you must tell Anne. Ring the bell. Anne, you will be glad to hear that Mr. Hartley is going to marry Mrs. Durnford."

Anne sat down, and wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron.

"Now, I'm content to go," she said. "Oh, Mr. Hartley, Mr. Hartley—and she never tired of hearing how I dandled you on my knees when you were a little baby a month old. God bless and keep you both, my dears."

That evening the Chorus assembled. Lynn and Jones arrived nearly at the same

moment. Both seemed strangely preoccupied and nervous. Jones could not sit down. He walked about, upset glasses, and comforted himself as one under the influence of strong emotion. Venn only seemed perfectly tranquil.

"What is it, Jones?" he asked at last.

"My play came out last night at the Lyceum."

"Oh," said Lynn; "and failed, of course."

"Never mind," said Venn, "you can easily write another. After all, what matters little disappointments? Mere incidents in our life, giving flavour to what else would be monotonous."

"Yes," said Jones, "if one may quote Byron on such an occasion as the present—

'Oh! weep not for me, though the Bride of Abydos
Wildly calls upon Lara to slumber no more;
Though from Delos to Crete, from Olynthus to
Cnidos,

The canoe of the Corsair is hugging the shore.

Oh! weep not for me, though on Marathon's mountain,

The chiefs are at thimble-erig, as is their wont;
Though beneath the broad plane tree, by Helicon's fountain,

The languishing Dudu is murmuring Don't."

"We will not weep, Jones. Sit down and be cheerful."

"I am a humbug," cried Jones. "Oh! why were you not there? It was a great success. The house screamed. I have succeeded at last—at last." He sat down, and his voice broke almost into a sob as he added, "I have written to Mary."

"This will not do," said Venn. "He violates every rule of this Chorus. He brings his private joys into what is sacred to private sorrows. Lynn, he must be expelled."

"Stay a moment," said Lynn. "I, too, have something to communicate."

"What? You, too? Have you, then—"

"No, I have accepted a judgeship in Trinidad. I start next month."

Venn looked round him with astonishment.

Then he turned red and confused.

"I, too," he confessed, "have my secret to communicate. Yes, my friends, the Chorus is dissolved. I am going to be married."

They looked at him nervously.

"I am to marry my little girl."

"Thank God," said Lynn.

"Why, who else could I marry? There is but one woman in the world, so far as I am concerned. We shall be married imme-

diately, and go to Italy, till we are tired of it; then we shall come back again. There will be no wedding fuss, or breakfast, or other annoyances—unless Sukey likes to come here for a final kidney."

"And the Opuscula?"

Venn winced.

"I shall begin their careful revision with a view to publication—at my own expense. Lollie is rich, you know," he added, simply. "Besides, it will be good to have something to do. In the morning, we shall roam about and enjoy the sunshine. In the evening, I shall correct the manuscripts while Lollie plays to me. You see, I am not in any hurry about publishing. Perhaps in ten years' time you may see an announcement of their appearance."

"The last night of the Chorus," he went on. "My friends, there stands before us the venerable bottle of champagne which was brought in the very first night of the newly-established Chorus, now twelve years ago. This night must witness the drinking of that wine. Aged and mellowed, it is doubtless by this time in splendid condition. I would Arthur were here to join us. Jones, get the champagne glasses from the cupboard. Lynn, my boy, help me to remove the wire. Are we ready? Now, in the sparkle of the generous wine behold the brightness of the future. Our youth will be renewed. We shall live again in the sunshine of success and happiness. Behold!"

He removed his hand from the cork. It did not immediately fly out, and he had recourse to the vulgar expedient of pulling it out with a corkscrew. After great exercise of strength, it came out with a dull thud.

He said nothing; but while all three crowded round the table, he poured out the wine. It was flat, dead, and sour. Not a single sparkle in the glass.

They looked at each other.

Lynn laughed bitterly.

"It is an emblem of life," he said. "Nothing compensates. We have wasted our youth."

Venn stared vacantly at the unhappy wine, which seemed an omen of bad luck.

"I believe it was bad at the beginning," he murmured. "It came from the public-house."

Jones, however, brought his clenched fist upon the table.

"Emblem of life? Compensation? Rubbish!" he cried. "We have waited, we

have suffered. What of it? The suffering is gone, the waiting is over. It is no more than the earache I had when I was a boy. Even the memory of it is almost faded. Venn, Lynn, this infernal bottle is the emblem of our hopes and disappointed ambitions. Go, cursed symbol of defeat."

He hurled the bottle into the fireplace, and threw the glasses after it.

"And now, Venn, if you like, I will get you some new champagne, and drink to your happiness, and to yours, Lynn, and to my own. In the words of the poet—

'Look not for comfort in the champagne glasses,
They foam, and fizz, and die;
Only remember that all sorrow passes,
As childhood's earaches fly.

At the great Banquet where the Host dispenses,
Ask not, but silent wait;
And when at last your helping turn commences,
Complain not 'tis too late.

And see, O Chorus of the disappointed,
Ourselves not quite forgot;
And after aimless play and times disjointed,
Sunshine and love our lot."

THE END.

POLYGENISM.

ENGLAND lately sent out Sir Bartle Frere to plead before a semi-civilized ruler the cause of the oppressed negro. It is not the first time that she has interfered on his behalf. Many years ago she temporarily ruined her West Indian dependencies to do him what she believed to be justice. She has long employed her navy in checking the slave trade; and if she were inclined to sympathize with the Southern States in the War of Secession, yet she felt a thrill of delight in hearing that the North had freed the negro. Nor is her kindness of feeling confined to this race alone. Everywhere in her mighty empire she wishes it to be thought that she rules without distinction of persons, meting out even-handed justice to all, whether the colour of their skin be white, black, red, yellow, or tawny. And this on the ground that all men are brethren—children of one and the same family.

Side by side with this belief in the unity of the human race—a belief thus embodied in practice—is a scientific opinion of some philosophers that mankind comprises a plurality of species. "*Nihil humani a me alienum puto*," said the Roman dramatist; but a particular school of anthropologists

tell us that he was probably or even certainly mistaken; that the difference between man and man is the same in *kind*, if not in *degree*, as that between the lion and the tiger, or the wolf and the fox. If philanthropy is a good thing, it is so only on some principle like that of the "Ancient Mariner," that

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small."

If the abolition of slavery was right, after all it only belonged to the same class of legislation as the motion lately brought forward by Mr. Auberon Herbert in favour of house sparrows and hedge sparrows. William Wilberforce, John Howard, and Mrs. Fry did a good work; but their work did not differ essentially from that of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Many people who are startled by such statements will at once take refuge in the assertions of a certain old-fashioned Hebrew book on the Origin of Man. Not for worlds would I object to their resting content with its teaching. But it is possible that some of them may be rendered uncomfortable by having various difficulties thrown in their way. The old story of Galileo and the Inquisition will be once more dragged up. Our ancestors misunderstood, perhaps, the Bible theory of astronomy. Our fathers were similarly misled in geology. Why may it not be that we are alike deceived in the matter of anthropology? Ought we not to have learnt by this time that it is quite a mistake to appeal to religion in matters of science? Such language we have all heard and read.

I have my own very strong opinion about it. But this is hardly the place to state it; and I am not going to appeal to religion now. Whether we are all one species or not; whether English and Malays differ as the lion does from the tiger, or as the tortoiseshell cat does from the tabby, surely this question has some interest for us. The view we take of it cannot but influence us in some points of practical importance. It ought to be specially interesting to a people whose colonial empire embraces so many and various nations. It is possible, and I think worth while, to rest the question on a purely scientific basis; and this is what I propose now to do, at the same time avoiding, as far as may be, all hard, technical language.

Polygenism is a name which originated

in America, and signifies the doctrine of those who hold that the different races of men, or some of them, are of different origin. In other words, that there never was a time when mankind consisted of a single pair, or a single family, or even resembled one another as much as one Englishman resembles another. Its supporters have mixed up the question with two others—first, the Darwinian theory that man is directly descended from the monkey; secondly, that primeval man was essentially a savage as distinguished from a civilized being. We do not feel called on to express here a decided opinion about either of these questions. If our great-grandfathers ever so many times removed were hirsute, arborescent animals, it may still be asked whether or not the Peruvian and his Spanish invader were descended from the same species of monkey. If their earliest human ancestors were savages, it is left uncertain whether they differed more than the two portions of one tribe of Indians will when they have separated for a few years and settled apart. On the other hand, suppose the Darwinian theory of the descent of man erroneous—and few even of its most ardent votaries but admit that it requires further proof—we are not one step advanced towards a solution of the question at issue. It would still remain scientifically doubtful whether men first appeared in one part of the world or in many contemporaneously; whether the first human inhabitants of the earth were constructed after one type or after many. And again, it is evident that the first men may be conceived of as having been savages, or as holding a middle position between savagery and civilization; or, lastly, as approximating as closely to the civilized state as their numbers and other circumstances permitted. And on each of these three suppositions there may have been, or may not have been, more than one type.

Still, there is an evident reason why Polygenists prefer to believe that man is descended from other animals, and that he appeared first as a savage. If man does not differ more from the brute than one species of brute does from another, then there is some ground for judging of him as of the brutes. They differ so greatly in different parts of the world that we recognize them as very distinct species. Thus, in the New World, the puma replaces the lion, the jaguar the tiger, &c. We should find it hard

to believe that some lions, like what we see in a menagerie, having by some means crossed over from Africa to South America, they or their descendants lost their manes, and, in short, were metamorphosed into pumas. If man is only an improved brute, it is certainly less probable that the men of the New World are descended from those of the Old. And in this case it is pretty clear that the first *human* condition would be that of utter savagery. Yet, after all, I will make bold to say that the burden of proof rests with those who hold that man is not an exceptional being. Let them make the most they can out of instinct, let them pile up story on story of the sagacity of the dog or the elephant, or the cunning of the monkey, it remains, and has to be accounted for, that man and man alone is everywhere—or with the rarest and somewhat doubtful exceptions—a fire-using animal, a weapon-making animal, and an animal who tames other animals. The Australian savage probably cares less for fire than my dog; yet he can make it at will, while poor Fido would be only too happy if he could. It is thought a wonderful piece of instinct in apes to throw sticks or cocoa-nuts at a traveller; but the distinction between a natural stick or stone and one artificially shaped *for a purpose* is almost infinite. Where is the brute which has attempted to take in hand its fellow brute, to change its nature, to make it subservient to its master's will so as to do his work for him? Yet even such deplorable specimens of humanity as the Fuegians have their tame dogs.

These three characteristics of man's universal nature would in themselves go far to show that he forms but one species. On the other hand, Polygenists rely on a number of arguments to prove that the different races cannot have sprung from a common origin. Let us look at them as stated by M. Pouchet. He lays stress on the difference of colour. Some writers have divided men into races by this distinction alone. To take the two extreme cases, it does seem very difficult to conceive that the pale-faced European and the jetty negro should come originally of the same stock. But cross the Atlantic, and we shall find, without going beyond the inhabitants of a single street in New York, or the waiters at a single hotel, every variety of shade between white and black. So I have seen a Moghrebbin skeikh with his two wives, the children by the Arab wife no darker

than many English boys, the family of the negress black as Erebus. Of course, this merely proves the possibility of gradations. It does not prove of itself that the gradations could have originally come about without mixed blood. But half the difficulty arises from putting the case as if white men were alleged to have been modified into black, or black ones into white. Suppose the original man was simply dark, neither black nor white. The difficulty is at once greatly lessened; and it becomes conceivable that part of his family may have had their colour modified in one direction and part in another. It is often said that heat is not enough to account for the colour of the negro. I grant it, as it will not account for the copper-coloured Indian or the tawny Malay. Yet it would be too much to say it has nothing to do with the matter. I have often observed in America that the darkest negroes had the palm of the hand lighter than the back—many shades lighter. This looks very like an inherited character, owing to the back of the hand having been for generations more exposed to the sun than the palm.

As for anatomical differences in the form of the skull, the shape of the foot, &c., I dare not venture upon them. When one of our most eminent anatomists is said to have made a mistake between the skull of a Scotchman and that of a negro, it is clear that great care is needed in reasoning from such data. With regard to the hair, there is certainly a great difference between the average European and the average negro. But so there is between thin golden hair and coarse black hair; and yet who would think of dividing the people of England into two species by the colour and texture of their hair? It does seem to be well established that climate can modify hair, and has done so in the case of the Americans.

Under the head of bodily peculiarities, M. Pouchet attaches some importance to the negro fondness for squatting in a crouching position. I have not been in India, but I believe this is a favourite position with the natives, who are surely not negroes. M. Pouchet should have visited a Staffordshire colliery village, where on "Reck'nin' Moon-day" (pay day) he might have seen scores of colliers squatting. Some eight or nine years ago, a colliery proprietor wished to build a church for his men. These petitioned that there should be no seats, as they

could listen to a sermon so much more comfortably while crouching in their favourite attitude!

Something has been said of national pathology, or the comparative freedom enjoyed by one race from the diseases which prove most fatal to others. But to take the most striking example. Parts of Central America, of the Indian Archipelago, the south-east of the Black Sea shore, and, above all, the West Coast of Africa, are reckoned deadly to Europeans. Yet there are numbers of English and Scotch whose constitutions seem utterly proof against yellow or swamp fever. The French enjoy a greater immunity than we, according to published statistics. The Italians and Germans are yet more exempt. Surely, this looks more like the inherited effects of climate than any essential distinction of race.

Stress has been laid on difference of mental qualities. "Show me," it has been said, "a single line worth remembering written by a negro." Perhaps the same might be said of some of the minor nationalities of Europe, and yet would only prove that their attention had been little turned to literature. But looking at another race, whose mental qualities are not usually much higher than those of the negro, there is a case of a Red Indian who took a degree with classical honours. If reading for honours became common among Red Indians, we should expect one or two occasionally to enrich the world with some gem of literature. Again, it is said the negro—it is always the poor negro who is held up as a pre-eminently distinct species—is so stupid that he can hardly find his way about the country. Such was M. Pouchet's experience in the Soudan. Perhaps the fault was partly in M. Pouchet. At least, my own experience of African races, and their readiness in finding their way across trackless deserts, has been very different.

M. Pouchet lays down authoritatively that "each system of language is absolutely irreducible to others, both by its basis and form." Ten years ago, several attacks were made on the view, then first popularized by Max Müller, that the majority of European languages are kindred and of common origin. It is quite curious now to look back and see how even very learned men misunderstood the accomplished professor, and supposed him to say that all these languages were *derived* from Sanscrit, and not that

Sanscrit and they were alike derived from an older speech. But that so many tongues, spoken by so many races, should have a common origin, and that hints should be dropped that the other branches of human speech will probably be eventually brought into relation with these—this is quite intolerable to those who hold that five or six or more species of monkeys, independently of one another, developed into men; and, independently of one another, invented each their own system of language, their own grammar, their own vocabulary. It is sufficient to say that investigations have now been followed up in many languages, the very names of which were hardly known to earlier philosophers, and their tendency is to increase the probability that there is a common origin of language. To use the supposed improbability of such common origin as an argument against the unity of the human race, and then to argue back that, because there is no common origin for man, therefore there is none for language, is to reason in a vicious circle. And yet, in the "Proceedings of the Anthropological Society" are remarks which are virtually tantamount to this.

Again, it is said that just as one animal lives in one part of the globe, and another in another, and that those which require one climate cannot possibly be naturalized in another, so is it with the supposed species of men. The white man cannot be naturalized in the tropics, the negro in the temperate zones, &c. A species transported to an uncongenial climate must die out, as the royal Bengal tiger would if let loose in the Forest of Dean. It has even been suggested that it is impossible for Europeans to adapt themselves to the climate of North America. It has been boldly stated that the population is only kept up by emigration—that the natives are degenerating, and are destined in time to die out. On this supposition, the Red man is indigenous to the American soil, and he alone can thrive there. Europeans may dispossess him for a time, but prolonged residence results in modifying their type. Such modification takes a direction incompatible with the permanent existence of the modified type. Were anything to check the flow of emigration, the last United States man would soon be scalped by the again triumphant Indian. Now, there is no doubt that the transplanting of a mainly English people to North America

has sensibly altered their type. Look over a few numbers of an old volume of *Punch*, and one will get a good idea of the characteristics of Brother Jonathan. The Yankee is leaner; his neck appears longer; his hair is inclined to be lank and dry; there is an almost feverish brightness in his eye. His average height is probably greater than that of the European; there is a want of metal in his voice—as there is in the European voice compared with some Orientals; lastly, his nervous organization is more tense. In his "Highlands of the Brazils," Captain Burton points out very similar changes as having come over the Spanish and Portuguese in the New World. I pass over, at present, the case of Europeans in tropical America; but as regards the United States, I contend that these symptoms by no means betoken the dying out of the race. In the main, they amount to excess of nerve and deficiency of fat, as compared with the original stock from which they sprung. Just the same contrast prevails between the English and the Arabs. Yet the Arabs are one of the oldest races—perhaps the oldest in the world—and show no signs of dying out.

"Is there a single case known of a nation undergoing transformation?" triumphantly exclaims M. Pouchet. It is hardly a fair question. Suppose there were not one known; still, considering how recent is our acquaintance with many parts of the earth, how little way back even European history goes, and how long is the time probably required for any great transformation, it is clear that the absence of a known instance would be insufficient to prove its impossibility. What has been said of the formation of a new type in America, within the short space of two or three centuries, does go a long way to prove its probability. On the circumstances which I am about to mention too much stress must not be laid. It is allowed by many that there is some basis of historic truth in the legends of a Norse discovery of America, and of Prince Madoc's voyage thither with a Welsh colony.

Now, I have read somewhere—I think in an old *Annual Register*, but have unfortunately lost the reference—that in the last century a Welshman living in America was taken prisoner by a tribe of Indians, and found that they spoke a corrupted Welsh dialect. There is also a story of a Welsh soldier conversing in his own language with a

people called the Mud Indians. If it could be proved that there are or were recently any Norse or Welsh traces among the North American Indians, this would give an answer to M. Pouchet's question.

Meanwhile, I turn to the evidence of Mr. Winwood Reade, who says:—"I feel certain that the inhabitants of Equatorial Africa are not aborigines. They have among them many vestiges of a higher state of civilization, and it is probable that they have been migrating during ages towards the west. When they arrive at the seaboard *the type begins to change*. The complexion, from tawny, becomes black; the hair becomes less abundant; the lips thicken; and, in fact, they become typical negroes—a race of men which have been falsely put forward as types of the African, but which are exceptional beings found only on the swampy banks of the African rivers, or in fenny places." If this be so, the conventional type of negro must be looked on as a modification of an earlier one. That, in its turn, must be naturally supposed to have been modified from a still earlier type. In this way we shall at length arrive at the primeval man, from whom other types may have branched off in like manner, but in other directions.

Another objection is raised to the unity of man. It is said that, among animals, hybrids or mules are rarely perpetuated beyond one, or at most two, generations. The same is alleged of hybrid races of men, and is held to show that there are really distinct species. Half-castes, in America and in India, are reported to die out in two generations at farthest. Now, this proves nothing against the common origin of man, for two reasons. First, if it be the fact now, it does not follow that it was so ages ago, before the different types had departed so far asunder. Secondly, the examples taken are always in countries where one of the two races is at a fearful disadvantage. If there are no half-castes in Bengal of the third generation, it may be doubted whether there are any pure blood European families of the same standing. Before the argument can have any value, it must be shown that the same result follows if the two races meet halfway—in a sub-tropical climate. For those who divide the human race into species, but place, as some do, English and Hindoos in one species, the example of Indian half-castes proves too much. For those who

look on the Celt as a distinct species from the Teuton—as some have been extravagant enough to do—the undoubted mixture of Celtic with Teutonic blood over half Western Europe is no small difficulty.

As to the Red Indian, it is well known that families of mixed Indian and white blood abound all over America. They do not die out in a generation or two; indeed, some of the best families in the South are proud of their descent from the lineage, for instance, of the Indian Princess Pocahontas. The Hungarians in Europe and the Persians in Asia both come of two very different stocks, and neither of them show any signs of dying out, at least by reason of hybridity.

It appears to me that the doctrine of Polygenism has been reached by working from the wrong end. Surely, it is not sound philosophy to begin with arguing for the necessity of dividing a species, and to pronounce a dogmatic decision on that, before drawing even one of the lines of division. But here there is not the slightest agreement as to what constitutes any one of the supposed species of men. How many of the African races form one species, how many of the American form another? These questions are relegated to the future, in favour of the great general question which some tell us it is dishonest bigotry to settle in any but one way—viz., that there must be a plurality of species.

Perhaps science will never be able to return a certain answer. But at present I think she must decide that the probability is all on the side of the old-fashioned belief which has asserted itself in so many practical ways. To believe that in working for the good of our fellow-men in other lands we are interesting ourselves in those who stand to us in a scarcely nearer relation than the chimpanzee; to persuade ourselves that America and Australia are all a mistake, and that their fast increasing populations are destined to fade away slowly but surely; or, again, that it is "a sound biological generalization that the extirpation of the lower race should be the immediate cause of the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving—namely, the production of the higher animals," this is a cold and cheerless creed. We may be excused for requiring very rigorous proof before accepting it. We have not found such proof so far.

"The Queen's English" is a tongue understood of the people from Tyne to Tamar.

Yet in the different counties do the mouths of our country-folk shape it very differently; so that the speech of Lancashire is hardly intelligible to the "Men of Kent." But not on that account do lay or learned admit that there is more than one language, but only dialects. Nor can any one draw a hard and fast line between these dialects, so insensibly do they slide into one another. Need we expound the simile? All the earth is of one blood, yet in the different countries are many races; and if we look only at the extreme varieties, we may gaze at the contrast until our eyes grow weary and our judgment warped, and we dream of distinctions eternal and from the beginning. Whereas, like the English dialects, the human varieties pass into one another, so that the most learned are sometimes sore perplexed when they would class individuals. And as there is a common element of Saxon and Latin in all English, while the peculiarities of the dialects arise of Norse and Danish, and Frisian and Celtic; so in the races of men there is the common element of human nature, while the peculiarities are engendered of food and climate, and what not. And these we can put aside as being but "the guinea's stamp," and see and believe that

"The man's the man for a' that."

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—XI.

AS soon as daylight appeared next morning, we were up; and whilst some of us collected wood enough to make a fire, sufficient to cook our simple breakfast—which consisted of chops, damper, and tea—the others got the horses and saddled them, ready to begin the work of driving the cattle through the river, without loss of time.

When breakfast was finished, we mounted and rode off, getting the cattle together, and by passing them between two of our party, counted them over to make sure none had strayed away during the night. By ten o'clock we had them in one large mob, and were slowly driving them towards the first stream, through which we had little trouble in forcing them, as it was only a small and shallow one. The next, however, was the main stream; and in order to get a suitable place for crossing, we had to go about a mile higher up the river's bed. Here we

found a long "spit," where the stream set over to the other side, and we fixed on this as the best place for crossing. Our object in seeking a spot where the current set to the opposite side was, of course, to compel the cattle to swim across when they got swept off their legs; otherwise, as fast as we drove them into the deep water, they would turn, and swim back again to the same side.

Now began a noisy, busy scene. Men shouting, dogs barking, whips cracking, and cattle lowing, as we tried to force them into the cold, rushing water. Every now and then a young bullock would try to make off, evidently not relishing the prospect of a cold bath, and vainly hoping to escape by galloping over the rough shingle bed. Vain hope, indeed! A quick, active stock-horse is instantly after him; whilst a long, heavy stock-whip is busy cutting long stripes on his hide, and cracking with a report loud as a pistol-shot in his ear. No use his twisting and turning, like a hare; the stock-horse can spin round quite as fast as he can, and at each turn down comes the cruel whip, drawing blood at every stroke, and cutting through hair and skin as clean and sharp as a knife. Tired at length, out of breath, panting and exhausted, his tongue hanging out, and his hide covered with sweat and blood, he returns to the mob, eager to seek safety by rushing wildly into the thickest part, whisking his tail and "horning" his companions from sheer spite and vexation, and ready to repeat the experiment on the first opportunity, only to meet with a like result.

The speed with which a thoroughly good and perfectly trained stock-horse will turn when at its greatest speed is astonishing, and requires a great deal of practice on the rider's part to retain his seat. Sometimes, when a cow or bullock is closely pressed, it will stop short, throwing its head low down, and turn round sharply. In an instant the horse does the same, almost seeming to keep its two fore legs still and to allow its hind legs to fly round, making it a most difficult matter even for a first-rate stockman to keep in the saddle. These stock-horses appear to delight in galloping after cattle, and often display an amount of reasoning and sense which is more than mere instinct, resembling as it does the cool, calculating wisdom of a man. I have known many horses which, when "cutting out"

cattle—that is to say, separating cattle singly from a mob on the run—would, after seeing the selected one, follow it closely and constantly through the mob without any guidance from its rider until it forced the unwilling beast to leave the other cattle and fly for safety. One horse I knew which, when a bullock “rushed” him—that is, ran at him to gore him—would quietly stand still, and when it got within reach kick it with one foot on the forehead. This horse was one of those savage, untamable, buck-jumping brutes which are so dangerous to ride, but which, if once conquered, make the best horses in the world. Most horses take good care to keep out of reach of cattle’s horns; but, with all their care, it is not uncommon to get a horse gored, and I have known several horses killed in this way.

A friend of mine, who was riding after a small mob of wild cattle, was “rushed” by a young bull, and had his horse killed under him. Master bull, not contented with having done so much mischief—as any other bull with a properly regulated mind would have been—came up and began butting at the poor horse, much to my friend’s dismay. At first he thought of jumping up and running away, and then of hitting him on the head with his stock-whip handle; but, considering how much bigger the bull was, and how much stronger, he thought it wiser to lie still. And so it proved, for soon the young bully trotted off to join his retreating comrades, leaving my friend unhurt, and glad to escape so easily.

I have had many narrow escapes myself, but have always got off with only slight injury to my horse. One of the nearest things I remember was one day when driving a cow away from her calf, she turned and rushed me; and before the horse I was riding could get out of her way, she put her horn under the flap of my saddle, and between the stuffing and my horse’s ribs, without so much as even taking the hair off. But I have wandered sadly from my subject.

Many a vain and fruitless effort we made to force the cattle into the boiling stream; but each time as we got them into the water they broke back, and we began to think we never would get them to the other side. At last, by taking a small mob of about thirty, and having driven the main mob back out of sight behind some sand hills, we managed to force the obstinate brutes into deep water; once afloat, they were soon swept

across. In doing this a rather laughable misfortune occurred to Walker. A young heifer, not liking the cold prospect before her, broke back and galloped off in the direction of the large mob. Bill went after her in hot pursuit, no doubt anxious to show us how good a stockman he had become. Unfortunately, when going best pace, and closely pressing the truant heifer, they both came suddenly on the brink of a deep hole full of water. Quick as thought the heifer stopped short, and turning sharp round was away on a different tack. Bill’s horse, accustomed to this sort of sudden, but, to its rider, unexpected movement, followed suit with such thoughtless haste, that poor Bill, whose seat in the saddle was always rather loose, flew over his horse’s head, and went souse into the water, head over heels, and, I verily believe, going right down to the bottom. As soon as we got the first detachment safely over, we drove the remainder up to the stream, and soon had them all over. Then the usual preparations for camping took place: first the small tent was pitched, then firewood collected—this consisted chiefly of small twigs and branches of trees swept down by the river and lying hidden amongst grass and sand—then “tussocks” of grass were pulled up to make beds of, a fire lighted, tea made, our blankets spread out in the sun; and we sat down on the grass to enjoy a simple meal of mutton, tea, and damper, with appetites sharpened by our long fast, which made us relish our frugal fare more than the worn-out and dissipated “diner out” would conceive to be possible. That was a capital answer that Dr. Abernethy gave the old alderman who, anxious to regain his failing appetite in order to enjoy an approaching civic feast, went to him for advice. “Live on sixpence a day, and earn it.” I never heard of any one complaining of want of appetite in New Zealand when travelling with stock, or when working in the bush; but I have several times had good reason to lament over having a very excellent—should I not, under the circumstances, call it “distressing”?—appetite when I had not the wherewithal to satisfy it. Once, for instance, when working in a small bush amongst the hills, far from the station and difficult of access, I ran short of everything except tea, sugar, and rice. On this not very strengthening diet I had to live for a week, working hard the while. This sort of

living may suit a Lascar or a Malay, but it did not suit either me or my companion, for we both felt very ill by the end of a week, and went back to the station.

Stevens started off that evening to Christchurch, intending to return next day if possible. So we were left in charge of the cattle, with nothing to do but keep them from straying.

Again behold us seated closely round a not very cheerful fire, each as usual smoking the very blackest and shortest of clay pipes, and trying, through the soothing influence of hot grog, to make ourselves believe we were comfortable and enjoying ourselves.

"I have a proposal to lay before this meeting," said Pat, slowly, between the puffs of his pipe; "and that is, that Mr. William Walker be called on to fulfil his promise, and relate a tale for the amusement and instruction of the cold and tolerably dirty, but honourable members present."

"Hear, hear," I replied. "I have much pleasure in seconding such an excellent proposal; and suggest that he should proceed at once, on penalty of forfeiting his share of grog."

"I will do my best," proceeded Bill; "but my life has been passed in dear old England, among civilized beings and peaceful scenes; and not, like yours, in this wild country, where the everyday life is full of uncertainty and adventure. So you must not expect me to give you a personal experience with much of the wonderful in it, and must agree to accept truth in the place of sensation. With this excuse, I will begin what I am pleased to call

MY TRAVELLING COMPANION.

It was a cheerless, foggy November day in London. The thick yellow atmosphere felt damp and cold, and penetrated through the thickest and warmest clothing, causing me to shiver and shrink up into a corner of the Hansom cab in which I was being rattled along from my hotel in Jermyn-street to the Paddington station, there to catch the Great Western train to Cheltenham, where I was going to spend a few days with an old maiden aunt, who is going to leave me some money one of these days; but who—dear old soul—will, I hope, keep me out of it for many years yet to come.

I have the greatest possible objection to being late for a train, or even to being hurried when starting anywhere. I like to have

time to pick a comfortable seat in a smoking carriage, next to the window, and to arrange my rug, and get the usual stock of newspapers, without which no Englishman with any pretensions to respectability would dare to make ever so short a journey. Then I greatly enjoy the hurry and bustle at a large station like Paddington. I like to watch the curious people one never meets elsewhere. Here comes the respectable and happy married paterfamilias, with a bonnet-box in one hand, a bundle of rugs in the other, and sundry small parcels under each arm, closely followed by his better half, who, with a baby in her arms and a little urchin hanging on to her dress at either side, is giving him sundry injunctions anent the safety of the thousand and one boxes which have been so generously and confidently entrusted to his care, and for which he is held totally responsible. Unhappy individual! Should he unfortunately lose one, what a fate awaits him! For months everything that is needful for the comfort of his ill-used wife and suffering children is discovered to have been contained in that famous box, which must truly have been like a Noah's ark, with the everlasting properties of the widow's cruise. Does his wife require a new bonnet? Was not the one she intended to have worn for many more months lost in "that box you forgot at the Paddington station, my dear"? If Mary Ann's dress looks shabby, the same complaint is made; or perhaps the wife of his bosom tells him that "in that box, which you so carelessly left at the station, although I told you to take particular care of it"—she had told him the same thing about each of them a dozen times—"I had put an old dress of mine, which I meant to have made into two nice dresses for dear Mary Ann, so as to save you something; although I do *not* think I should have to pinch and save, when Mrs. Jones can afford to spend such a lot of money on dress as she does. What you do with your money I can't think." Perhaps the poor deluded man tries to rebel. Foolish and misguided wretch! His better half, true to her name, is certain to get the better of him; and he will, in the end, be glad to surrender, minus a "peace offering" in the shape of a new dress or a bonnet.

Then there is the gentleman of undecided habits, who first takes a second-class ticket,

and gets it changed for a first; and on wishing to exchange it again for a third, and being refused by the irritated ticket-clerk, is noisily indignant; and who, after having sat down in several carriages, and being dissatisfied with each in turn, makes a rush for one just as the train is moving off, and nearly gets left behind, after all.

As I walked up and down the platform, looking into the carriages, I saw in the compartment next the one in which I intended travelling, two very neat little rugs, strapped up with so much care and nicety as to leave no doubt in my mind about their being feminine property.

Smoking carriages are, no doubt, a very great convenience and luxury—nay, even a necessary; but, after all, it seems to me that people might travel much more pleasantly if they would consent to be a little more sociable and less exclusive. See two honest Englishmen in a close railway carriage, one in each corner, every now and then glancing at each other in a suspicious sort of manner, as if each thought the other was only waiting for an opportunity to commit robbery or murder. Not a single civil word is exchanged, although, perhaps, they are thus shut up together for hours. Each reads his paper and smokes his cigar, sulky and silent, perhaps longing the while for the other to open a conversation, but too shy or too retiring to think of doing what, in his proud wisdom, he is pleased to call “pushing himself forward.” And so they proceed, bored with themselves, and weary and tired of a journey which, but for their own silly reserve, might have been pleasant and enjoyable. If, however, either of our dull friends had been compelled to take a seat in a carriage not dedicated to the holy weed, and therefore probably shared by some of the fair—and talkative—sex, how different is the result. Behold how our sullen, silent recluse is suddenly changed by the nameless witchery of a few simple words uttered in soft tones by a woman. See him chatting freely and pleasantly, his face all animation, when before it was a stolid blank, and believe, if you can, that this is the same person you saw sitting lonely among others, boorish and dejected.

“Get on with your story, Bill,” interrupted Pat. “If you go on like this—faith, and it will be to-morrow before you finish.”

“All right, Pat,” replied Bill. “I am just

going straight ahead now without any more checks.”

As I turned at the end of the platform, I saw, or thought I saw, a man go into the carriage where the ladies' things were; but, thinking it was one of the railway people, I paid little attention to him. I did not see him come out again, and on passing the carriage was surprised to find it empty. Still I did not think anything of it, concluding he had come out among the crowd unobserved by me.

I was standing at the newspaper stall, getting *Punch*, or some such paper, when I heard my name mentioned, and, turning round, found myself face to face with a cousin of mine and a friend of hers, whom I had known well last summer. In fact, I may as well tell you that Kate Fraser and I had been thrown much together, yachting and boating; and, as a natural consequence, when a pretty, jolly girl and a young fellow are together, and enjoying amusements for which both have the same tastes, we had grown to like one another very much, if we had not, in fact, fallen in love. I shall not say anything more about her except that she was young, about eighteen, pretty, and pleasant.

My cousin Fanny told me that they were going to Cheltenham also, and hinted that I might as well relinquish the pleasures of the fragrant weed for the sake of enjoying their society during the next four and a half hours. A certain look from another pair of bright eyes decided me, and we all three took our places as the guard shouted out—

“Take your seats. Any more going? Take your seats.”

A loud slam at the door, a short whistle from the engine, a slight jolt, and we were off. Chatting and laughing, the time slipped rapidly away, and it seemed almost directly that we ran into Reading station, and shortly afterwards reached Didcot.

Remembering that I had left my rug and small portmanteau in the smoking compartment, I called to a porter to bring them to me, which he did just as the train was moving out of the station again. As I pushed my portmanteau under the seat, I felt some obstruction which seemed to me to move voluntarily as I tried to force the portmanteau past it. My first idea was that my fair cousin or her friend was trying to evade the company's laws by smuggling a dog in the carriage with themselves; but,

on my accusing them of the supposed crime, they both declared themselves innocent. Then a suspicion of the truth flashed before me, which instantly became certainty.

There was a man hidden under the carriage seat! What should I do? If I said nothing about it, and he suddenly showed himself, the two girls would be dreadfully frightened, and would perhaps in their terror prevent me from protecting them and myself, by clinging to me. Quickly I made up my mind to tell them, and prepare them for a row if the fellow meant mischief. No doubt, this was the man I had seen enter the carriage at Paddington. Probably he had seen the two rugs; and concluding, as I had done, that they belonged to two ladies, had crept underneath the seat, intending to come out after the train had started, and rob them. My going into the same carriage had spoilt his little scheme.

After giving the girls the usual cautions about not being frightened—the very thing to make them more so—I told them what I believed to be the case. Neither said a word, but both turned very pale; and Kate gave a little hysterical sob, evidently not relishing the notion of being in such company. We then consulted together as to the best course to take. The train would not stop again until we got to Swindon, where we would not be for more than half an hour. After talking it over as quietly as we could in low tones, we decided on making him come out, and give an explanation of his conduct. Accordingly I lifted the piece of cloth which hung down the front of the seat, and asked him what he was doing hiding himself there for, and telling him to come out at once.

Slowly he crept out; and I can assure you I was greatly relieved to see that he was not such a dangerous or determined-looking ruffian as I had expected to see. A poor, miserable, half-starved looking wretch he was, pale and weak from illness and want. There was not much cause to fear violence from such as he; and I saw the girls brighten up as soon as they saw him.

"Oh, sir, and you ladies, have pity on me!" he said, in excellent English, but in a wavering voice. "I am only a poor, sick creature, without the wish or the strength to injure a child. Don't, for pity's sake, hand me over to the police. I am innocent of everything except hiding in this carriage, without a ticket."

"How comes it, then, that you hide yourself in this manner if you have no evil intentions?" I asked, half pitying the miserable object standing before me, hat in hand.

"I will tell you, sir, the truth," he replied, eagerly, "and feel sure, when you have heard it, you will pity instead of blaming me. Two years ago I was a well-to-do tradesman in Swindon, happy and contented, with a wife and two little children. One day I had business in a town some distance from Swindon. The train by which I returned was late, and I caught a severe cold waiting about in the cold, exposed station. The doctors ordered me to leave England, if I wished to save my life; and so I went to the South of France, leaving my business to be managed by my wife and a cousin. He turned out a swindler, and, after contracting large debts in my name, absconded, taking with him all the ready money he could lay his hands on. When, a little more than a year ago, I returned, I found all my little property swept away; and myself a bankrupt, without a shilling in the world, and so ill and weak that I was unable to earn even the absolute necessities of life for my poor wife and helpless children. For months we struggled on, just existing. Then, advised by my friends, I went to London, hoping there to find some occupation more suited to my state of health. My wife and children were to remain in Swindon until I got work. But work I could not get—at least, none which in my weak state I could perform; and to save myself from starving, I was forced to sell matches, and do other such like work.

"This morning I got a letter saying that my wife was dangerously ill, and that both my little ones had scarlet fever. I was to go back at once. How was I to go without a shilling in my possession? I tried to earn something, if only a few pence, but in vain; and at last, distracted by the thoughts of my dying wife, I hurried off to Paddington, determined to beg a ticket to Swindon. In vain I stated my case, I was ordered away from the station; and at last, half mad with despair and grief, I hid myself under this seat."

"Poor man!" said Kate, putting her hand in her pocket for her purse.

I stopped her. The man might be a swindler, after all. How could we tell? His looks and words certainly pleaded strongly in his favour, and I also felt disposed to believe him.

"If we allow you to go free"—his face brightened, and he began to express his thanks; but I went on without noticing his interruption—"you must give your address, and we will find out whether or not your account of yourself is true. The position you have placed yourself in," I added, seeing him flush at what I said, "gives me every reason to doubt you."

He gave me an address, which I carefully wrote down. Soon afterwards we ran into Swindon, and he got out unobserved and slunk away, disappearing amongst the crowd.

All the way to Cheltenham we talked about the strange adventure, and we agreed to return to Swindon in a day or two, and find out the real state of affairs.

Accordingly, one day, we—that is to say, Fanny, Kate, and I—went and, after a good deal of trouble, found the place to which we had been directed. It was a poor, miserable hovel, destitute of furniture, but clean, though comfortless and chilly. In it we found a sick woman and two children, in one bed, huddled together for warmth's sake. I tried to persuade the girls not to enter the house, for fear of infection, but without success—they were determined to take their own way; and I could not blame them, or wonder at their willingness to run a risk, when I saw the unfortunate objects of their pity. Poor things! I never saw such poverty and suffering. It was past description.

To make a long story short, we found out that what the suspected robber had told us fell far short of the truth; and, at Kate's suggestion, we started a subscription for the poor, sick, starving creatures amongst our friends, and succeeded in getting enough to set them up in a little shop. Before I left I went and saw them. The man who gave us such a fright was very ill, and I do not think could last long; but his wife and the two bright, happy-looking little girls were quite well. The shop was progressing favourably, and, by good and careful management, had increased wonderfully.

Thrown much together in our work of charity, Kate and I discovered that we were necessary for each other's happiness, and we agreed to link our lives together. Our friends, however, made us promise to wait for three years before settling down in what some of them were pleased to call "the jog-trot monotony of married bliss." It is not often that a simple act of charity is so well

and so quickly rewarded as this very slight one of mine was. You know now, old fellows, why I am so anxious to leave for Panama, and try my luck at treasure-seeking. Before the three years expire, I wish to be able to return with the means at my command to offer a home to Kate such as she deserves. Something tells me I shall be successful.

"By Jove, old man!" cried Pat, jumping up and shaking him warmly by the hand, "and I hope you will. Faith, and I've nearly made up my mind to go in with you. If Stevens sells this lot of cattle, we will go to Christchurch; and if we can hear of a chance of getting to them foreign parts, we'll roll up our swags and be off."

"Well, I hope you will both be lucky," I said; "but I think your chance is a very outside one. Depend upon it, if there had been anything hidden there, it would have been found long ago."

"I have thought over all that, but cannot see the necessity for such being the case. Any one burying or hiding treasures would naturally look for a secure place—one where others would not think of searching," replied Bill. "And, for my part, if I were hiding anything, I would put it in the simplest place possible—knowing that people always hunt about in the most out-of-the-way and unlikely places, when perhaps the article sought is close beside them all the time—unsuspected because of its very simplicity."

"Then do you expect to find the treasure you speak of accidentally, or have you an organized method in which you intend to make your search?" I asked.

"I should certainly wish to go to work with some sort of method. But before seeing the locality, it would be unwise, and, indeed, almost impossible, to organize any plan," replied Bill. "If my companions have not met with any success, we will try and go to work systematically. But it is time to turn in."

DOCTOR MIDDLETON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A DESPERATE CHARACTER."

CHAPTER IV.

I AM usually rather slow in contracting friendship with any one; but in the present instance, whether it was actually the bond of a common country that drew us

together, or some peculiar fascination in my new acquaintance, I cannot tell. After all, perhaps, it was his loneliness and utter hopelessness both as regarded this world and the next that excited my compassion. I know not; but the fact remains that I felt powerfully attracted towards him, though I rebelled somewhat at first, and struggled with all my strength to resist the feeling that daily grew upon me—for I disliked him in many ways, and for many reasons; but no one can be stronger than his destiny, and in a short time I succumbed.

We became fast friends; and the bond thus contracted was never afterwards severed, notwithstanding the amazing vicissitudes of fortune that awaited us—one of us, at least.

He told me his history, which, with his entire sanction, I have related in full elsewhere; but may as well recapitulate briefly here.

He was the elder of the twin and only sons of a country parson, who died shortly before the lads had reached their nineteenth year: they had had the great misfortune to lose their mother in the hour of their birth. Having no near relatives to control their movements, they decided upon emigrating to Australia, where the younger died; and the elder, after undergoing a number and variety of hardships, was on the eve of fortune, when a stupid misconception relative to a young lady—Doctor Middleton's daughter—of whom he was enamoured threw him into a frenzy, which caused him to quarrel with his best friend, and sent him, a bitter misanthrope, back to his native land, where chance directed him to Miss Fernley's boarding-house.

The first appreciable evidence of good effected by his friendship for the writer was the abandonment, in a great measure, of this abominable habit of cursing and swearing.

"You don't swear downstairs, before the ladies, Woodward," I said to him one day; "why should you do so when you and I are alone together? It is a disgraceful habit."

"I'll try and break it off, mate."

"I wish you'd give over using that vulgar old-hand expression you are so fond of—I cannot endure it."

After a while he gave that over too.

I could scarcely believe it possible, after I had known him for a few days, that he could have any serious intention of becoming

a clergyman, as Miss Matilda had assured me was really the case; for he affected Atheism, or Pantheism, which is much the same thing.

"I wonder," he said to me one day, "you don't turn parson yourself. You are such an adept at preaching to me, I'm sure you're just cut out for the trade."

"Excuse me," I replied, "I have never felt conscious of the slightest aptitude for that high calling. On the contrary, I feel certain that as a medical man I shall have greater opportunities of benefiting my suffering fellow-creatures; for, of course, I shall not neglect to put in a word in season."

"Or out of season either, I'll be bound," sneered he.

"Just so," I replied—"in or out of season, wherever I see an opportunity of doing good."

"You're a paragon."

"Not I; but I wish you were nearer one than you are. What on earth can have put it into your head to go into the Church, as you phrase it?"

"Well, my father was a parson, you see, and so were his father and grandfather before him; and perhaps there may have been something in that that induced me to think of following the same trade."

"Trade!"

"Why not? What is preaching but a trade?—and a bad one, too. But it was not altogether the Egyptian policy of hereditary occupations that actuated me in the matter; but the clerical business gives a fellow an entrance into the best families. Do you twig?"

"Not I."

"Why, there are such things as heiresses in these happy islands. They are proverbially partial to a white choker; and so, as I missed one fortune through a woman—like an idiot that I was—I thought I'd see if I couldn't pick up another with one."

I noticed an uneasy expression in his eyes as he made the above confession, in a bitterly sneering tone, and I gathered hope.

I did not press the subject then, but I worked upon him by degrees; and, gradually, he came round to a more healthy frame of mind.

"I believe you are right," he said to me one day, after the subject had again, for some time, been warmly discussed between us—"I believe you are right. I have no business in the Church."

"Not as a minister, certainly."

"Still, I must do something. It is not exactly that I could not manage to exist without it; but I feel sure I shall go mad if I am long without some occupation."

"There are lots of ways in which you might employ yourself. For instance, as you are so fond of scribbling, why not turn professional author?"

"You are verdant; as if I hadn't tried and tried until I am sick and tired of it."

"Have you, indeed?"

"Ay, I've written folios; but can't find editor or publisher ass enough to accept them. I haven't money enough to print them myself; and if I did, nobody would be idiotic enough to read them."

"Well, there is the law."

"As if I wasn't bad enough already!"

"Why not try medicine?"

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, with energy, "you are right."

"Very good, Charley, I shall be delighted to introduce you to my master, the professor; and as the class recommences for the session next week, you are just in time."

"I am quite in love with the idea."

"I think it is a good one, and as I have a year's start of you, I shall be able to put you up to a good many tips. The elements of any science are fearfully dry, but once you have mastered them you will get on famously."

"Very likely."

"Haven't you taken your degree in arts?"

"Not yet, but I shall at the next commencement. I had gone as far as my Little-Go before I went out to your country, and have continued since I came home, with the intention, as you know, of taking orders. However, I am glad I have given it up."

"So am I, Charley. It was the last thing you ought to have thought of."

He sighed.

"I believe I am mad at times."

"Not at all; but you have led too lonely a life, and have grown misanthropic in consequence. When once you begin to mix with other fellows, you'll be all right."

"The only thing that makes me hesitate is my age."

"There is not much difference in our ages. You'll get on famously, I've no doubt. And you have a great advantage over me in having had a classical educa-

tion, which will also enable you to take out a much higher degree."

We did not work in the same school, for he attached himself to that of the University, whilst I was already connected with the College of Surgeons; but we read together of an evening, and compared notes together, which helped us on considerably.

Charles Woodward was a changed man in many respects. He was generally cheerful, and seemed quite enamoured of his new pursuit.

At times the old restless expression would return to his eyes, but not for long.

Once or twice he said he was tired, and should give up the idea of becoming a medical man. He had enough to live on quietly, he said, and why should he torment himself studying what he would never practise.

"Nonsense," I used to say, and rally him out of his vacillation.

So matters went on for a year, during which he and I had made an excursion into the country for a few weeks, and he had taken his bachelor's degree.

In commemoration of the latter event he had treated the clerks and the rest of the boarders, much against my advice, to what he called a "spread;" when he and some of them got very noisy, so that I was expecting every moment to find the neighbours had sent for the police.

Miss Fernley was very indignant, and poor Miss Matilda had another attack of hysterics.

Up to that night, I feel sure that Charley was quite unconscious of the tender feeling with which he was regarded by that poor lady; but the truth seemed to dawn upon him then, and afforded him a good deal of amusement.

He had hitherto been scrupulously courteous in his behaviour towards her, except when irritated by her mistakes at cards; but, after the fatal discovery was made, he invariably addressed her in a tone of mock gallantry that grated disagreeably upon my ear, and so hurt poor Miss Matilda that she was nearly always in tears when he was in the room.

One day, when I had been remonstrating with him about his conduct, he said—

"Look here, old fellow, it's no use—out of this I must go, or that old woman will drive me mad. I shall take lodgings somewhere, and you shall join me. We'll board together, and be as jolly as sand-larks."

"I don't want to leave, Charley. This place suits me, and there is nobody in love with me that I know of."

"Very well," he replied. "You can do as you please."

I said no more, and he continued—

"Yes, I shall go; and if I follow on to the deuce, it will be all your fault."

"It is very hard to throw the blame of your own folly upon me. Why need you mind her? If it amuses her to stare at you, what's the harm?"

But it was no use trying to argue with him, so I agreed to what he proposed.

"You must tell the old girls," was the next remark he made.

"Thank you," I replied, "I'd rather not."

But nevertheless, in the end, I did as I was bid.

Miss Fernley took the news very philosophically. She was getting weary of it all, poor soul, and one boarder more or less made but little difference to her.

Miss Matilda was not present when I announced our intention of leaving the house to her sister—who, I presume, told her the news; for she did not appear at dinner, and at tea-time her cheeks were as highly rouged as a Tasmanian apple, and her eyes were swollen like a Paramatta pear.

Poor Miss Matilda! I could not help feeling sorry for her.

After some searching we found convenient lodgings at no great distance—one sitting and two bed-rooms.

It was dreary work sitting down, day after day, to one's solitary steak or chop, which was sure to be either roasted to a cinder, or underdone enough to have satisfied Miss Sharman.

Charley generally dined in town at some restaurant, a piece of extravagance which my means precluded my indulging in.

I must confess I often, during that time, regretted the flesh-pots of Egypt—to wit, Miss Fernley's roast and boiled, her puddings and pies.

When Christmas Day came round, I was invited to dine at my aunt Thorowgood's, and accepted the invitation with a certain amount of pleasure.

I wanted to bring Charley with me; but he was in an unusually misanthropical frame of mind, and would not be persuaded.

Mrs. Maguire, our landlady, promised to make him comfortable with a plum pudding and appropriate sauce at home.

I doubted her ability, but kept my misgivings to myself.

It was a fearfully wet evening. I got on better with my youthful cousins—thanks, I suppose, to a supply of books and toys with which I had provided myself—than I had ever done before, and we spent a very pleasant time.

It rained a little deluge all the evening, and my aunt insisted upon my remaining at their house all night.

Wouldn't Charley be angry with me in the morning!

Never mind. Conscious of my own innocence, I should have no difficulty in parrying his thrusts. I stayed.

I suppose there are such phenomena as spirit-warnings, previsions, or forebodings—call them what you will; at least, I fancy I have felt something of the kind more than once, and especially I did so on that Christmas night.

I could not sleep for a long time; and when at last I dozed off, it was to dream of Charley.

Such disagreeable dreams! He was dying, and calling for me. He was dead.

I don't know that I ever spent so unpleasant a night.

My aunt laughed at me in the morning when I told her my dreams and forebodings. She said it was the plum pudding—which, certainly, was very rich.

I don't believe it was, however; and after breakfast hurried back home, as I used to call my lodgings, for want of a better name.

I had forgotten my latch-key, and was obliged to knock two or three times before the door was at last opened by Mrs. Maguire herself, who looked at me reproachfully, and said—

"Oh, Mr. Cochrane, I'm so glad you've come, for your friend is dying, I'm afraid."

Then my dream was true, after all. I did not wait to hear more, but rushed up to Charley's room.

He was certainly very ill.

His face was flushed, his lips parched and dry, and his breath short and laboured.

A glance told me he was suffering from inflammation of the lungs.

"Charley, my dear fellow," I exclaimed, "when did this come on?"

"It has been coming on for some time," he said, with difficulty.

"Why did you not tell me? It might have been checked."

"I thought it was merely a cold, and did not want to trouble you when you were going out to enjoy yourself."

Poor fellow! And I had thought he was in the sulks.

"Mrs. Maguire, will you make a strong mustard plaister, and put it on his chest, while I go for the Professor?"

"Don't leave me, Tom."

"My dear boy, I must; but only for a very short time. I shall take a car. I'm sure to find him at home."

I did not wait, even to see whether my instructions to the landlady were carried out or not. It would have been better had I done so; for she either forgot or preferred waiting for the Professor's arrival.

As I expected, I found that gentleman at home.

"Doctor," I exclaimed, as I burst into his study, without waiting for his servant to announce me—"Doctor, I'm afraid Woodward is dying!"

"Dying?" coolly interrogated the Professor, without moving. "What's the matter with him, eh?"

"I think it is inflammation of the lungs."

"Say pneumonia, Cochrane. Always call diseases by their technical names when you are speaking to a member of the profession. It is only when you are addressing a layman you are to use the vernacular."

"My dear sir," I interrupted, "the poor fellow is dangerously ill. I have come to bring you out to him at once."

"Hem!" coughed the Professor. "Did you make an examination of the patient, Cochrane?"

"No, sir. I never thought of doing so."

"Wrong, Cochrane, wrong. You should never jump at conclusions—it is unprofessional. How do you know it is not asthma or bronchitis Woodward is suffering from?"

The Professor was irritating.

"Will you come, sir, or not?" I asked, with less deference than the Doctor was accustomed to from his pupils.

"Keep yourself cool, Cochrane—keep yourself cool in every emergency. That is the first condition necessary to a successful career in the profession."

Certainly, the learned gentleman was aggravating.

"Will you come, sir?"

"Patience, Cochrane—patience, my good fellow. Let us understand one another.

What have you done for your friend in the meantime?"

"Nothing."

"Very bad practice, Cochrane—very bad practice indeed. Could not be worse."

"I thought it better to see you first; but I desired the landlady to put him on a strong mustard plaister."

"Good, Cochrane, good. I see you did not quite lose your head."

The Professor was past endurance.

I seized my hat.

"Good morning, sir. I must try and get some one else."

"I very much doubt," observed the Professor, blandly, "if you will make a successful practitioner, Cochrane. You are deficient—sadly deficient in coolness."

"Sir, my friend is dying—will you come?" I asked.

"Certainly, Cochrane. Kindly ring for my man."

I rang the bell.

"Order the carriage round, John."

"I have a cab at the door, sir—pray, pray do not wait."

"That will do, John. You need not order the carriage just yet, but send it round for me in half an hour to— Where do you live, Cochrane?"

"No. 7, Marigold-terrace, Rathcar, Doctor."

"Very good. You will remember the address, John?"

"Yes, sir."

"If not, write it down at once. My boots."

With aggravating coolness, the Professor put them on.

"My coat."

He got into it with extreme deliberation, and waited, without the slightest sign of impatience, while John elaborately brushed it down. Then he armed himself with a stethoscope, and at last proclaimed himself ready.

At least half an hour had been wasted.

"Drive like mad!" was my injunction to the jarvey, as soon as I had got the Professor safely into the cab—"a man's life depends on your speed."

"Never fear, yer honner! But where to, av ye plaze?"

I gave him the direction; and I suppose the Doctor never made a quicker journey in his life.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed, more than

once; "we shall surely be upset. The man is either mad or intoxicated."

"No fear, sir," said I; "it will be all right."

I tossed the driver half a sovereign, and rushed up the steps to open the door for the Professor, whom I could have kicked for the deliberation with which he followed.

When at last he was inside the house, he divested himself of his great-coat, hat, and gloves; and carefully deposited those articles in the parlour before I could persuade him to go upstairs.

In the sick room, however, I forgave him all; and once more learned to distrust my first impressions.

Nobody could possibly have been kinder.

He made a most careful examination of the patient; and then delivered the following judgment in his hearing:—

"There is no organic lesion: but there is strong inflammatory mischief in the whole of the right lung, and considerable congestion at the base of the left; should that increase, no earthly power can save you, my poor fellow. As it is, you are in extreme danger; but I trust you are prepared for any emergency?"

Charley was scarcely conscious; but he partly gathered the sense of the Professor's speech, and his lip quivered.

"Must I die?"

"Not necessarily," replied the physician. "But should human aid be ineffectual, you are, I trust, prepared for the alternative?"

Charley closed his eyes and remained silent.

"Doctor!" I exclaimed, as I pressed his hand on the doorstep, "I beg your pardon, and hope you will forgive me my hard thoughts of you this morning."

"Pooh! pooh! Cochrane. Nonsense. I suppose you thought I was unfeeling; but I saw you had quite lost your presence of mind, and never lose an opportunity of inculcating a useful lesson. Good-bye. I shall see Woodward again to-night."

He left full directions as to the patient's treatment, which were rigidly carried out, in spite of Charley's opposition; still no amendment in his condition took place.

Towards evening the patient was in violent delirium.

I could only pray for him; and did so, earnestly, that he might recover.

He lived.

During the night, or, rather, in the early

morning, a change took place; and when the Professor called, he pronounced him better, and gave good hope of his recovery.

The sick man was not as pleased as one might have anticipated.

"I thought," he murmured, "it was all over, and I should be at rest; and now I have to go through the fever of life again—God's will be done!"

The convalescence was slow but steady.

If Charley had been thin before, I must leave it to the reader's imagination to picture what he was when he rose from his sick bed. It positively made me shudder to look at his wasted form.

We were not uncomfortable at Marigold-terrace.

As Charley got stronger, he and I held a consultation together one day, and decided upon falling back on Miss Fernley, should that lady have vacancies in her establishment, and be willing to receive us.

"Will you go there, Tom?"

"Very well," I assented.

Miss Fernley received us very graciously. There was only one room vacant, my old one. Woodward's was occupied by a new boarder, a Mr. Old, a very nice gentleman; but clerk number three was going to leave in a few days, and in the meantime she would make up a bed for my friend in my room, if I had no objection.

Of course I had none; and it was arranged that we were to return on the morrow.

How Miss Matilda's eyes glistened!

I felt quite like going home.

The clerk left sooner than was expected, and Charley was installed in his own room, Mr. Old electing to take that lately occupied by the retiring clerk.

A great change had taken place in my friend.

He was a new man, as I fondly believed; and so, I think, did he.

"Tom," he said to me one day, "it is no use battling against one's destiny; I cannot go on with the medical."

"What are you talking about?" I cried in astonishment.

"You will laugh at me, I dare say, but I cannot help it. During my illness I had a vision."

"Nonsense. My dear fellow, you have no notion how delirious you were, and what utter rubbish you talked all the time."

"No, Tom, I feel I must become a

clergyman. My mind is fully made up. I told the Professor so yesterday, when he called."

"What did he say?"

"Pretty much what you have; but it is no matter. I cannot disobey the Divine command. As soon as I am able to go out, I shall resume my attendance at the divinity lectures, and in about another year will be ready to take orders."

"Well, God bless you, Charley. I should be the last in the world to dissuade you from your intention, if I thought—" here I stopped.

"If you thought it was my vocation, you mean."

"Yes, that was exactly what I was about to say."

"And do you doubt it?"

"I must speak faithfully, Charley—I do indeed."

"Why so?"

"I believe your vision is nothing but a fever-begotten delusion, and that you will yet repent of your hasty decision."

"Tom, I do mean it; I do indeed."

There were tears in his eyes as he spoke. I could say no more.

ONE OF THREE.

AT the prow of my bark stood Hebe, fair,
Long ago, when its sails I set
For the voyage of Life, 'neath a sky so rare,
That I view it again with regret.

The mate of my vessel so gallant was Love,
At the helm stood the beauteous boy;
But he plumed his wings for the haven above,
And I shrouded my first-born joy.

The tiller by Friendship was next essayed;
But oh! when my bark was toss'd
By the tempest that left its sails all frayed,
My second-born boy was lost.

Thro' tears then I gazed, as the storm so wild
Spent its fury and passed away;
In the sky I espied my third-born child—
Hope, shedding her gladsome ray.

Alone now I stand on the deck of my bark,
Guided still by that one bright star;
And its lustre is safety when night is dark,
Though the haven may yet be far.

WALTER SEDWIN.

TABLE TALK.

NEARLY twenty years ago, Mr. William Bates, of Birmingham, called attention to the curious fact that when oysters were out of season tobacco was in with our ancestors.

In a book entitled "Directions for Health, Naturall and Artificiall, etc., London, 1633," in the chapter on "Salivation, or Tobacco Taking," the writer says:—"Good tobacco leafe, somewhat biting in the taste, of a tawny colour or somewhat yellow, being taken fasting on a raw or rainy morning, after the manner of physicke, in a purified pipe, during those months which in spelling want the letter *r*, it is a most singular and sudden remedy against the megrim, the toothache, the falling sickness, the dropsie, the gout, and against all such diseases as are caused of wintry cold or waterish humours." In fact, this tawny leaf seems to have cured in 1633 as many diseases as a patent medicine does in these days. What the Anti-Tobacco Society will say to these properties of "that abominable vegetable" we do not know; but we feel sure they would readily consent to see smokers put out their pipes during the eight months of the year that have no *r* in them, as a preliminary step towards putting them out altogether.

A CORRESPONDENT: As observed by Justice Stareleigh to the immortal Mr. S. Weller, the verbal statements of any man are not evidence; for which reason, the following must be taken cum grano salis:—The late well-known banker, Mr. — (and if I were to divulge his name, any reader of this magazine would at once recognize it), was a notoriously bad dresser, and, when going to his place of business every morning, with that peculiar slinking, sidling gait mostly affected by shabby-genteel people, used each day to be met by a benevolent elderly gentleman, who, on one occasion, slipped an envelope into his hand, and made off as fast as his old legs would carry him. On opening it, Mr. — found a £10 Bank of England note, and, on passing his would-be benefactor the next day, he stopped him and said, "Sir, allow me to thank you for your charitable intentions, and to observe that, as my name is —, and I am a banker, I have no occasion to avail myself of your kindness."

Shortly will be commenced a new story of very powerful interest, entitled THAT LITTLE FRENCH-MAN, by a highly popular author.

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The authors of the articles in ONCE A WEEK reserve to themselves the right of translation.

ONCE A WEEK

NEW SERIES.

No. 284.

June 7, 1873.

Price 2d.

DOGHERTY'S COURTSHIP.

A RUSTIC SKETCH.—IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.



DICK DOGHERTY was what his acquaintances called "a fine, strappin', big lump of a man." This flattering reflection upon Dick's personal appearance may be

freely translated: he was tall, well made, and good-looking—three qualities which he indubitably did possess. Now, be it known to you, my potent, grave, and reverend reader, Dick had reached his twenty-fifth year of age without ever once having lost his appetite through the beauty of that wondrous creature, woman. He had always treated his female friends with respect, civility, and good nature; but farther than this he never dreamt of going. Women, as he graphically expressed it, were "quare kin' of vegetables," and he never could rightly understand or appreciate them.

Many were the fair and rosy damsels who practised their fascinating arts upon Dick; for, besides his personal attractions, Dick was in a good way of falling into a very nice little property; but to all their seductive coquetry he remained carelessly obdurate.

It was generally considered, indeed, among the good people of the neighbourhood, that Dick would maintain a state of perpetual celibacy.

In the company of what Bobby Burns very appositely calls "the lovely dears" he

was slightly reserved, and even just what you know as shy; and I think you will own, ladies, that these—the latter especially—are not the properties you like in a wooer.

His imperturbable air of simple friendship no female charms could in the slightest degree disturb. Whisper—now, this is for my lady readers only—I verily believe, Dick never kissed a girl in his life. Well, it so happened that, one Christmas night, there was to be a ball held in a barn some mile and a half from Dick's house; and as Dick, for the fun's sake, was rather fond of these gatherings, and received several pressing invitations to this one, he made up his mind to go.

Behold him, then, with this view, bent over his looking-glass that Christmas evening, engaged, with his tongue in his cheek, in the stately occupation of shaving.

This necessary process being completed, he washes, does up his hair nicely; dons his Sunday scarf, boots, suit, and hat; and lo! Richard, looking prime, is ready for the road.

Behold him in the mazes of the dance, his partner a very pretty young colleen of about twenty Mays, with whom he seems to get on astoundingly well. Behold him, again, hanging at her skirts as she leaves to go home, and—mystery of mysteries—proffering his services as an escort! Behold him putting on her shawl for her at the door of the house, and looking fondly into her eyes as she thanks him! And behold Dick is lost and my story begins.

"Well, Dick—now, how did you really enjoy yourself?" said the pretty colleen as they passed through the wicket to go upon their way.

"Nannie—Nannie, where are ye?" at that moment a female voice exclaimed at some distance.

"Here," replied Dick's companion.

"Where?"

"Here."

"Speak again."

"Here, at the gate. What do you want?"

Footsteps were heard, and presently a young girl, who proved to be Nannie's elder sister, came round a corner of the house to them.

"Why, ye young chit ye," said she, addressing herself to Nannie, "couldn't ye have told me ye were goin' away? Shure ye know— Oh, how are ye, Misther Dogherty? I declare, I didn't know a bit o' ye. An' how is all your people?"

"Well, 'deed, I darn't complain," said Dick, rather nervously, not exactly knowing what she asked or what he said, in his anxiety lest she should prevent him from seeing Nannie home—or, half as bad, come with them herself.

"But your people—are they all well?" continued she.

"Oh, my people—oh, a—oh, yes, they're all purty well, thankee," said Dick, a trifle confused.

But Nannie's sister, whose name was Mary, happened to have a sweetheart of her own—so Dick's fears, to his infinite delight, he found to be groundless, after all; and in a short time the two happy couples—Dick mysteriously insisting on the other pair going before, and on keeping a respectful distance before, too—were on their way to the fair damsels' home.

"Well, Dick, you didn't tell me how you enjoyed yourself yet," said Nannie, as they walked along together.

"Oh, first class," replied Dick. "I niver enjoyed myself better. It was good valyey."

No sooner had he uttered these words than he would have given half a crown he hadn't. A sense of the comparative coldness of his reply occurred to him, while a far better reply at the same time suggested itself, and occasioned him much remorse.

"Bad luck to me," thought he, "cudn't I have made her a better answer nor that? Shure, I might have said, 'How cud I miss enjoyin' myself, Nannie, when you were there?' or somethin' dacent like that?"

"An' how," continued Nannie, "did you like the music? Doesn't Billy play well?"

"Ay—oh, yes, Billy plays purty tidy; but in throth, to tell ye the thruth, I didn't hear much o' the music."

"You didn't! Why, I thought you were awfully fond of music."

"Oh, and so I am—tarbil fond of it."

"An' how is it you didn't hear it, then?"

"Well, you see—a——" But the words that Dick wanted to say would not come; and he reasoned himself out of his fallen purpose by exclaiming to himself, "'Tarnal o' war, I'm far too early wi' this kin' o' talk, anyway. It wud niver do. I'll have to thole a while longer." And then went on, "Well, you see, I was that busy watchin' the fun that I niver thought o' the music."

"Perhaps I képt you talkin' too much for you to hear or see anything. Indeed, it's just like me—I niver think of anybody's comfort," said Nannie, in a soft, regretful voice, as she hung her head and walked a little slower.

"By the powers o' Samson," thought Dick, as he drew a shade closer to her, and heaved a deep sigh, "if she does that again, I'll either die or have my arm round her." Then he said, in a low voice, "Now, Nannie, don't be talkin' that way. You know well enough you didn't keep me from seein' or hearin' anything. You know rightly I—I—I liked to have you with me—I'm shure ye do."

"Well, I'm very glad I wasn't in your way. But you know you don't care for girls, and I niver thought of that till afterwards."

"No—but, I say, quit talkin' that way, now, Nannie. I don't like to—to—I like some girls very well. I—I—I like *you* very well."

"Do ye, indeed? Well, I'm glad to hear it, for I thought ye had a kin' o' dislike to the girls."

And Nannie smiled up in his face.

They were walking *very* close together now; but Dick had not as yet found courage, though he had repeatedly tried, to steal his arm round Nannie's waist—a consummation which he had in his own mind determined to achieve before they went much farther.

There was another little act of theft, too, which he had purposed committing; but somehow he *could not* bring himself to do it.

"Hang it," reflected he, "there's no excuse to do it. I can't jist grab the girl at once, and kiss her, without bringin' it about some way or other. She wud think I was mad if I did."

As they rapidly approached their destination, Dick grew more and more nervous; till, when they were within fifty yards of the house, he really didn't know what Nannie was saying to him—though he was conscious

that she was talking, and that he was saying something in reply. He wanted also to arrange about seeing her again; but how to broach that subject he was equally at a loss to know.

When within a few perches of the door, Nannie stopped and said—

"Well, Dick, I suppose it's too late—or rather, too early—to ask you in? I'm awfully obliged to you for seein' me over; for, you know, the fact is, Mary and that sweetheart of hers don't care, I'm sure, about me being with them—and—and—"

"No; but I say, Nannie, do ye mane to say ye haven't a sweetheart of yer own, now? Now, tell me the thruth, an' don't be howlin' down yer head that way—haven't ye *somebody* looking ather ye?"

"For shame, Dick, to even hint such a thing to me. Who would be lookin' ather me?"

And she looked in his face with a smile and a blush that sent him into a whirl of bewildering joy.

"Well, I say, Nannie," said he, with an air of the utmost simplicity, "give us a kiss."

"What! Well, such impudence! I didn't think, Dick, that you would talk of such a thing. I thought you— Oh, Dick!—ah! Dick, you're tossing all my hair! I'll call Mary! Ah! don't, Dick—leave off, now, or I'll be very angry with you! Oh!—ah!—there, now, you're an impudent fellow."

Dick had forgotten himself, and suddenly discovered that he was holding Nannie in his arms, and kissing her as though he could never stop. As soon as he had recovered breath, he slipped up to her again as she was standing pinning up her hair, pouting and blushing, and, stealing his arm round her, whispered, in a half-regretful tone—

"No, but I say, now, Nannie, shure ye won't be angry? I cudn't help it, ye know."

"You're a hateful, impudent fellow, and I'll never speak to you again," said Nannie, pouting more than ever, but nevertheless not making the slightest endeavour to free herself from his encircling arm.

"Ah, now, Nannie, don't be cross. Shure ye know I wudn't a done it if I cud a helped it. Indeed, indeed, Nannie, I cudn't help doin' it at all. Don't be cross, now, like a good girl."

"You could have helped it rightly, so you could; and I'm sure I don't know what you did it for," said Nannie again, still pinning

at her hair, and allowing him to fold his arm closer round her waist without offering the faintest resistance.

"Well, upon my soul, Nannie—I mane, upon my honour—I cudn't help it—I cud not, indeed. Now, won't ye forgive me like a dacent girl?"

"No, indeed, I won't forgive you," replied Nannie, at the same time looking in his face just as she had done before.

"Don't—don't, Nannie—don't look in my face that way—I'll do it again if you do. I cudn't help it."

And forthwith Nannie looked sweeter than ever.

Dick again lost his self-control.

"Oh, Dick—stop—don't—indeed, I'll call—I'll tell mamma! Ah, now—oh! you have all my hair down again. Well, indeed, Dick, I'll never—never—never speak to you again."

And Nannie, after a few moments more, attempted to box Dick's ears.

Dick soon began to discover that Nannie's anger was not of a very dangerous kind, and many a little kiss and squeeze he stole before he parted from her.

But that parting—let us attempt to describe it.

"I'll have to go, Dick—I really must," said Nannie, not without a tincture of sadness in her voice. "If father would rise, and find us not in at this time, he would be ragin'. You know what sort of an old fellow he is, and he hates us to go out at night."

"Well, an' tell me, Nannie," said Dick, grasping her proffered hand in his, and looking down sorrowfully into her eyes—"when will I—I—when—when d'ye think—when—a—when will I see ye again, Nannie?"

"Oh, you may see me whenever you like, if that will do you any good," replied Nannie, with great naïveté.

"Well, will you let me come here and see you?" rejoined Dick, feeling that he wouldn't mind talking there till daybreak in the position in which he then was—standing close to Nannie, with her soft, little, unresisting hand in his, and hearing her pleasant voice in his ear.

"Oh, of course, Dick, I'll be very glad to—"

But, alas! here they were interrupted by the appearance of Mary.

"Why, Nannie, I have been waiting on you this ten minutes and more. What on

the earth kept you? Ha! what has you and Dick been doin', that your hair's tossed so much? Ye young mischief ye, ye make fun of me when you see mine tossed in the least; and yours is far worse than *ever* mine was, now."

"Indeed, it's nothing of the kind," said Nannie, blushing deeply, and beginning to fix it; "indeed, it's—I—I—"

"No, but I say, Mary, you're altogether mistaken, in throth," interrupted Dick, hastily, half pleased and half confused. "It's a mistake, indeed. It cum down—it fell down on the road. It got all loose, I think, an' come down wi' the dancin'—it did, in sowl, Mary—it did, in throth."

But Mary's own experience had taught her too much for her to believe these protestations of innocence. She laughed at their confusion, and then insisted on the propriety of Nannie and her stealing off quietly to rest at once, for fear of the "old fellow" getting up and raising a row—a not infrequent occurrence with the same old gentleman.

"Well, good night again, Nannie," said Dick, holding out his hand.

"Good night, Dick," returned Nannie, again letting her little hand fall into Dick's.

Dick this time gave it a gentle squeeze as he held it; and—oh, joy of joys!—he actually believed—yes, reader, he was quite convinced—that he felt a slight pressure in return.

"Good night, Nannie," said he again, unable to let it go.

"Good night, Dick—good night," said Nannie, at length reluctantly withdrawing it, and moving away with Mary.

"Good night, Misther Dogherty," said Mary back to him.

"Good night," said Dick to Mary—"and bad luck to ye," said he about simultaneously to himself. "I might a had her these half an hour longer only fur you."

When they were inside and the door shut, Dick experienced an almost overpowering aversion to going away.

He stood for about five minutes with his hands in his pockets, sighing very deeply as he looked up at the house; and then began to think what a privilege it would be to sit on the tiles all night, if he could only make sure that he was above Nannie's room. Having reasoned himself out of this luxurious desire, he turned and proceeded homeward; but had just got ten yards when he

stopped and retraced his steps, to have another look at the house, and see if he could find out by their lights what room or rooms Nannie and Mary occupied. After some little time, he saw one flickering at the gable window, just above the shed where the fowls were kept.

In half a minute more he saw a female form at the window, about pulling down the blind. He strained his eyes. It was—oh, yes, beyond a doubt—it was Nannie.

Sweet Nannie! He had almost a mind to throw up some gravel, and entreat her to jump into his arms, and nestle there for ever. But the blind suddenly went down with a creak, and shut the lovely vision from his eyes. At the same time, one of the ducks, which had thereby been disturbed in its slumbers, uttered a dreamy cry of remonstrance in the shape of a low and rather prolonged quack; and again all sunk into the stillness of the grave.

Dick turned away, scarcely knowing whether to be woeful or joyful, and sauntered slowly towards his home, thinking about Nannie.

But, oh! the thoughts that filled his mind during that saunter. There was not a word that Nannie had spoken that night, not a movement that she had made, but was raked up as evidence that she loved him.

Then a sceptical turn would come over him, occasioned probably by the sudden recollection of some word, or gesture, or movement that looked against him; and then all the evidence that a moment before had seemed so favourable in his eyes would immediately become darkly equivocal.

Then a farthing candle ray of hope would steal across his visions, and flicker a few minutes precariously; and then the farthing candle would go out, and leave him in utter darkness, whereat he would sigh as though he meant to break his heart right off; and, finally, would awake from his dreams with a start, to find himself about to try the interesting experiment of walking through a tree and into the roadside ditch—a little procedure which certainly would have been attempted to his dishonour, had he not become conscious of its futility just in season. Thus at least half a dozen times, in his homeward walk, was he in the full noon of love reciprocated, and in the dreary midnight of love unrequited—in the imminent danger of roving into a thorn hedge, and in the equally imminent and still more

alarming danger of rambling into a duck pond.

Poor Dick! He had left Nannie at about half-past two, and might have easily been home at a quarter-past three; but, instead of this, he first discovered that he was opposite his own door exactly as the old kitchen clock was chiming out four.

THE KNIGHT'S COUNSELS.

THEIR Iris hues, amid the gloom,
High Minster windows shed,
On slab that mercy craved, and tomb
Where breathed in stone the dead.

Steel-clad, on altar step inlaid,
A youth knelt, golden-curled;
Like angel-warrior's form arrayed,
With mists of angels' world.

Before him stood his snow-crowned sire,
Stark as a towering height;
His words flowed warm from holy fire,
Clear with unearthly light.

"Thy awful consecration o'er,
Now girt around thy waist
The sword a line of heroes bore,
By no foul stain disgraced.

Nor power, nor lands, nor gold they sought,
They breathed in nobler airs;
Nor, vain, for Honour's symbol fought,
So Honour's truth was theirs.

Go, son—a world before thee lies
Distraught by lawless deeds;
Where Guilt wins oft the victor's prize,
While prostrate Virtue bleeds.

And thou must hold in scorn thy life,
Content if thou shalt hear,
Amid the din of raging strife,
Thy soul approving clear

Whate'er thy hand effects with might;
And this thy guerdon best:
To fall upholder of the right,
Avenger of th' oppressed.

From Siren's voice bewitching flee,
Such well the brave may fear;
But let the cry of sorrow be
High mandate in thine ear.

As blast that rends the mountain pines,
Sweep down thy foes in fight;
As breeze when summer day declines,
So move in ladies' sight.

Yet sport not oft in festal hall
With Pleasure's moth-like train;
But oftener let in homage fall
Thy knee in dusky fane.

One type of all that's pure and fair,
One maiden's name and face,
Dwell in thy heart, if aught must there
Of earthly love find place.

More blest whose hearts are only smit
With sparks of heav'nly flame—
Whereon no woman's name is writ,
Save blessed Mary's name.

They see beyond the starry floor;
Earth melts before their eyes;
And from the battle's blood-red core
Celestial visions rise.

Go forth, and may a hundred lyres
Waft back thy fame to me!
Undimmed renown of hundred sires
Goes forth, my son, with thee."

W. B. OGILVY.

ALADDIN THE SECOND.

I WAS from my earliest youth fond of reading; but, among all the stories I ever read, none impressed me so much as that story, so familiar to every schoolboy, in the celebrated "Arabian Nights' Entertainment," called "Aladdin; or, the Wonderful Lamp;" and it certainly never occurred to me that I should realize it in my own person; but it did occur to me, and the following story is founded on fact:—

I am in the legal profession; and when, some twenty years ago, a managing clerk in a large town in the midland counties, I was consulted by a client, a wealthy maltster, respecting a claim he had of a hundred pounds sterling against a miller and baker at a small village called C—, a few miles below Peterborough, for money lent over six years before, in respect of the principal or interest of which he could get no satisfactory settlement, the client produced the bill of exchange, and I found that six years and three months had expired since the debt became due. Here was a fix. My junior principal suggested that I should get the debtor to sign an admission of the debt on the back of the bill; but I—having been informed that the debtor prided himself on being a shrewd man—pointed out that the admission would not remedy the defect, because, on the face of it, the statute of limitations would be perfectly clear of proof; upon which my junior principal left the matter entirely in my hands.

The next morning I took an early train to Peterborough, and then on to C—. I found, when I got to the station, I had about an hour and a half to spare before the next up train; and as the village was some mile and a half from the station, I had just time to pay a visit—and, if possible, settle the matter and return.

I accordingly proceeded to the house, and inquired for the debtor. I was invited by his wife into the house, she informing me that her husband would return in a few minutes. She, like her sex, was inquisitive, but I was not communicative; and at the moment her husband came in. He asked my business. I told him that I had come from Mr. M——, and asked him if he was prepared to pay any interest on the debt. He informed me that he should not pay one farthing until he had seen his attorney; he had not the money, &c., &c. Now, I had ascertained that the market day was the day previous to my visit, and I was pretty certain that he had the money in the house, and I told him so. He thereupon, with a powerful adjective, declined paying me anything. I then asked him if he had any objection to give me a new bill for the old one, and he said that he did not know that he had.

Now, previous to my visit I had provided myself with a new bill stamp, which I produced, asked for pen and ink, and drew a new bill for one hundred pounds, payable on demand.

At this moment, having previously asked me to have a glass of his old ale, which his wife had taken a jug to fetch out of another room, she returned, and he asked me if she could not accept it for him. I said no; and pointed out to him that it was not a very polite thing to ask his wife to do what I assumed he was perfectly capable of doing; to which he made no reply, but accepted the bill, and I then handed him the old one. Upon inspecting it, he said, with another very powerful adjective—he was rather good, or bad perhaps, in that kind of thing—that the old bill was out of date, in which I perfectly agreed; and he then, rising from his seat, said he would have the new bill back. He was a fine-built old man; I was in my prime; and I quietly informed him that I was not inclined to coincide with his view of the matter; and that, unless he was the better man, I should retain the new bill. And I further told him that I required the immediate payment of the hundred pounds and interest; and that I should proceed to Peterborough, and telegraph to my firm's agents in London to commence proceedings at once.

I did do so. The principal and interest were immediately recovered. I received the thanks of my principals and their client;

and I think I am fully entitled to call my story "New Bills for Old Ones; or, Aladdin the Second."

GAMING-HOUSES IN THE PYRENEES.

IT is not by the confirmed and disreputable gambler that the closing of the great German gaming-houses will be most bitterly lamented. Low-spirited invalids, respectable pleasure-seekers, and managing mammas will suffer more intensely from the blow. Serious play is more conveniently pursued in clubs, on racecourses, on the Bourse, and in private, than it ever was at Baden, Homburg, and Wiesbaden; but the gaieties, the parks, and the society of the German baths will be a bitter loss to the multitude who visited them for anything but play.

Whether one ought to feel a sincere sorrow for these latter sufferers is perhaps rather a nice point in casuistry; but there can scarcely be any harm in affording them such comfort as they may find in this article. The writer has enjoyed unusual opportunities of acquiring knowledge regarding gaming-houses in the Pyrenees, and the subject has a certain picturesqueness which may render it interesting to everybody.

During the last few years, a series of attempts have been made to establish public gaming-houses in the Pyrenees, and it appears likely that play may be definitely established this summer at St. Sebastian, in the Basque country; at Bosost, in the neighbourhood of Bagneres de Luchon; and in the Republic of Andorra. But as these places are all more or less Spanish, it must be remembered that whatever pertains to them is subject to that uncertainty and general topsyturviness represented by the proverbial expression—*Cosas de Espana*. Thus, about five years ago, the best French guide-book to the Pyrenees described a large gaming-house as already existing at a certain spot in Andorra; but the present writer, having visited the spot a few months later, found three small ruined cow-houses to be the only traces of human occupation discernible in that neighbourhood. The guide-book in question is nevertheless one of the best ever written, but the method has yet to be discovered by which it may be possible to reason from the past to the future in matters pertaining to Spain.

Although subject to the vicissitudes of Cosas de Espana, the gaming-houses of the Pyrenees are projected in localities not strictly Spanish. The three districts already selected do, in point of fact, govern themselves. The Republic of Andorra is almost wholly independent of the Spanish Government; the town of St. Sebastian enjoys the ancient privileges (*fueros*) of Basque towns, by which it is self-governed in all matters of internal administration; and the Val d'Aran, of which Bosost is a village, is separated from the rest of Spain by lofty and precipitous mountains, almost impassable during half the year, so that it is practically governed by its local authorities. It is because such local liberties exist on the Pyrenean frontier that the Pyrenees have been selected as the scene of gaming operations.

A small meadow, situated at the head of the French valley of the Ariège, and within a few hundred yards of an excellent French high road, was the first site chosen for a gaming-house. The stream that bounds this meadow on one side marks the frontier of Andorra; for the territory of the microscopic republic here laps over the French side of the crest of the Pyrenees. During five months of the year the place is free from snow, but it lies at an elevation of five thousand feet above the sea. The scenery is singularly desolate: not a tree is in sight; steep pastures slope up abruptly on all sides, except along the narrow bottom where the stream winds down successive platforms of rich grass; three ruined cow-houses are the only habitations in sight; and thousands of cows, horses, and sheep are scattered over the surrounding pastures in the summer. If the Government of Andorra could be induced to give permission, there was no doubt that a gaming-house on this spot would attract numerous punters from the neighbouring watering-places of the Ariège valley. The prejudices of the Andorra Government were the first obstacle to be overcome.

At this time, seven years ago, the pastoral government of Andorra was vested in the hands of an aristocracy, composed of the representatives of the oldest families, who were, at the same time, possessors of the largest flocks. Most of these men were strict Conservatives, and doggedly opposed innovations. But one distinguished Andorran proprietor had imbibed democratic opinions and cosmopolitan sympathies, and there was a certain rich smuggler who was willing to

support the gaming company. The bishop of the neighbouring see of Urgel, who possesses certain feudal rights over Andorra, was also prevailed upon to assist the scheme, as he was anxious for a road communicating with his Andorran vassals, and such a road was promised by the company. In these circumstances, money and wine were distributed, and work and prosperity were promised, to the poorest and most ignorant of the Andorrans. By such means, a majority in favour of the gaming-house was easily obtained; but it was a majority without much political power. Revolution was the natural consequence of such a state of affairs, and reaction naturally followed upon the heels of revolution. Thus, the affairs of Andorra have been in a state of continual turmoil ever since the gaming-house scheme was proposed. Battles have been fought, in which four or five hundred combatants were engaged, armed with rusty carbines and blunderbusses, that make much noise but rarely hit. A lowering of the franchise, approaching to household suffrage, and effected through the instrumentality of one of these fights, at one time enabled a council to be elected, which represented the opinions of the majority, and granted a licence for ninety years to the gaming company. Reaction, resulting in another battle, in which the Conservatives were victorious—though it did not annul this licence—made it possible to throw serious obstacles in the way of the scheme. Such are the vicissitudes of Andorran politics, which have caused the realization of the gaming project to be delayed through the last seven years.

But, on the whole, the project of establishing gaming-houses in Andorra has steadily approached realization. The fall of the Queen of Spain encouraged the Democratic party, who, acting in concert with the Spanish bishop, have been gradually gaining strength. The most active leader of the Conservatives was shot about three years ago, as he was approaching his house one dark night. His assassins are unknown, but his death removed a serious obstacle from the path of the Democrats and the bishop. The licence accorded to the gaming company has been faithfully maintained; but the company has been injured by dishonest servants, and hindered by the Prussian war. Some scraps of road have, however, been executed in Andorra; two iron houses, originally constructed for Australia, and capable of being put to-

gether in a few days, have waited for some years, together with the gaming-tables and all necessary furniture, under the charge of an agent on the Andorran frontier; and thirty thousand francs, deposited in the coffers of the Andorran State, are a security for the execution of the contract by the company. According to the latest accounts I have heard, it is announced that three gaming establishments will open this summer in Andorra; and numerous placards in the streets of Paris lately announced the early closing of the share lists of the company, as newly constituted for the working of mineral springs and gaming in Andorra. The concession of mineral springs, mines, manufactories, and printing establishments, has been granted to the representative of the renovated company; so that an era of progress and activity seems to be expected in Andorra as a consequence of the scheme. The question is, whether it will be actually realized or not; and on this question I will endeavour to give a candid and reliable opinion.

In spite of the political squabbles of rival parties, and the complicated opposing interests and sympathies which have made the whole politics of Andorra turn for seven years on the gaming-house question, I am certain that the scheme would have been realized several years ago, had it not been for the want of funds or enterprise on the part of the company. The Andorrans stipulated that the establishments should be opened in the heart of Andorra, and it was on this condition that the concession was granted; but the company, fearing the great expense required in the making of a road that should cross the crest of the Pyrenees, desired to commence operations on the small meadow described above, which belongs to Andorra, but is geographically situated in the French valley of the Ariège. The Andorrans, regarding the influx of coming pleasure-seekers as a Pactolus that would irrigate their territory with gold, argued in the following simple manner:—If the coming strangers leave their gold at our meadow in the Ariège, it will run down all the Ariège valley, but it will not cross the lofty passes that lie between the Ariège and the inhabited portion of the Andorra. This meadow in the Ariège had moreover been leased for a term of years to the inhabitants of a neighbouring French village, and these had sublet it to the gaming company, at a

heavy profit on what they paid to its Andorran proprietors. Besides all this, the meadow is situated in a desolate district on the frontiers of France, Andorra, and Spain, the favourite resort of smugglers, Carlists, and other dangerous characters, who might band together and make a descent upon the establishment. This danger the company intended to obviate by paying French, Spanish, and Andorran guards, who were to be established in three guard-houses, each surmounted by its national flag. But this was naturally disrelished by the Andorrans, who at the same time feared to annoy the French authorities by maintaining a gaming-house on a spot that lies in a French valley. The company has lost years in the hope of carrying out this particular scheme. As the early opening of the three establishments is announced, I infer that large funds are forthcoming, and in that case there is no doubt that the main project can be realized. One establishment may be allowed on the Ariège meadow, if one or two others are at the same time constructed in the heart of Andorra. From the first place to the capital of Andorra, it is about eight hours on mule-back.

The basin where lies the village capital of Andorra is a glorious site for a new watering-place. Its almost level floor is richly carpeted with green meadows and golden corn fields, watered by clear, dashing streams, and shaded by chestnut and beech. A huge black precipice bounds it on one side; a chaos of blocks, crags, and pines, rising steeply, on the other. Its only entrances are two narrow gorges that wind upwards towards the watershed, and one, still narrower, that leads, between savage precipices, towards Spain. Looking up the higher gorges, snowy peaks bound the view towards France. Around these, mists gather on the French side; but the pure blue sky of Catalonia is rarely clouded in the summer, and the whole basin is then filled with sunlight, that flashes in golden gleams from the rocks, and sparkles from each ripple of the streams. The houses, built of rough schist and roofed with slate, are hardly distinguishable from the rocks. The people, in red Phrygian caps, green sashes, blue stockings and jackets, and knee-breeches of brown wool, are picturesque and hospitable. Hot sulphurous water, of excellent quality, flows abundantly from the rocks. The want of good food and lodging has been the main drawback until

now; otherwise the magnificent scenery, fine climate, and primitive people of Andorra would have attracted tourists without number.

Not unlike Andorra in point of natural scenery, but very different in the appearance of its villages and their inhabitants, is the singular cul-de-sac called the Val d'Aran, which forms the head of the valley of the Garonne, but belongs, nevertheless, to Spain. Grand precipices, and steep, pine-clad slopes encase it on all sides, except where the Garonne emerges through a narrow and savage gorge. Numerous villages are perched upon the slopes—the houses, whitewashed and neatly slated, clustering closely round the sharp spire of the church. The dirty little borough of Bosost, one of the chief places of this district, was last summer the scene of roulette. Bosost is reached in a few hours by diligence—or more directly by a mule-path over a wooded col—from Bagneres de Luchon, the liveliest and most frequented watering-place in the Pyrenees. On the opening of the gaming-house it was at once crowded by fashionable tourists, who had taken advantage of these means of communication. Hardly had the croupiers started the ball, and uttered the customary formula, "*Rien ne va plus*," when the entrance was darkened by three banditti-like peasants—dirty, and armed to the teeth. At this sight, the Frenchmen, some of whom were provided with revolvers, produced their arms, and prepared to resist the attack of the supposed traditional banditti of Spain; the ladies screamed, and the croupiers clutched the gold of the bank. But the armed intruders fortunately hastened to explain, or deeds might have been done that would have long resounded in the annals of Luchon. They were not banditti, but rural guards, commissioned by the local authorities to enforce the payment of black mail. After some haggling, two rouleaux were paid over to them; whereupon they departed, and the game proceeded without further interruption. Subject to such trifling inconveniences, the exciting game of roulette will probably continue to enliven the summer season in the Val d'Aran.

But it is in the Basque country, on the shores of Biscay, that the gaming companies have the fairest prospect of success. The self-governing municipalities of the Basque towns afford tempting facilities to any project backed by capital; and at St. Sebastian

several gaming concessions have already been granted. This town will certainly care little for public opinion. Unjustly destroyed in the Peninsular War, it appealed to all Europe for redress, and received a gold ounce from a Burgos merchant as the sole result of the appeal. Since then, St. Sebastian has trusted to itself, and is now probably the most flourishing place in all Spain. Ten years ago, I remember it half its present size, and cramped by heavy fortifications. Now, the walls have been levelled into a splendid promenade, and a new town, in the style of the Paris boulevards, has been added to the old one. The houses occupy a flat peninsula, terminated by the citadel on a lofty rock, and bounded on each side by a picturesque and craggy bay; hills covered with innumerable villas and chalets bound all the landward side, and a fine sweep of sandy beach affords admirable bathing. Crowded in summer, and much frequented for its mild climate in winter, St. Sebastian is now the most notable watering-place in Spain, its Alameda, on fine Sunday evenings, combining the fashion of Biarritz with the picturesqueness of Spanish costume. As the first important station on the only railway from France into Spain, a constant influx of travellers and tourists is supplied to the place, and it is close at hand to Biarritz and Bayonne.

Public gaming-houses have been established here ever since the fall of Queen Isabella. The apartment occupied by the Queen during her last weeks in Spain was utilized as a Kursaal upon her departure. Another establishment, provided with a good reading-room, tables for roulette and rouge et noir, and a corps of imposing footmen, was soon elegantly fitted up. Play has not as yet proceeded continuously in these houses, for some difficulties were experienced in commencing; but in the summer months they are usually in full work, and there seems little doubt of their success. At the last-mentioned establishment, two German Princes, for whom the tables were politely opened, succeeded in breaking the bank; but as yet there have been few important operations. Of course, as in all gambling watering-places, the tables are designed especially to prey upon tourists. Even during the suspension of public play at the Kursaals, a rouge et noir table was opened to these behind the chief café—a card of admission, marked "*Cercle des Etrangers*," being freely

distributed to all likely strangers. The natives of St. Sebastian are theoretically inadmissible; but, though enterprising and industrious, they have long been confirmed gamblers. Hardly a café in the town is without its semi-private gaming-room attached, where monte, faro, or baccaret are carried on at crowded tables and with considerable stakes.

The example of St. Sebastian is a cause of envy to other free municipalities. Historic Fuenterrabia, that looks across the beautiful Bidasoa into France, proposes to convert its ancient palace into a Kursaal that shall attract the numerous visitors of neighbouring Biarritz. This scheme has not as yet borne fruit; but a most impudent project was realized about two years ago, under the noses of the Fuenterrabians. A private capitalist bethought himself that, without bribing any free municipality, there was a way of evading the laws against gaming that prevail on both sides of the frontier. In the middle of the frontier, Bidasoa, large boats are moored, forming dépôts for the smuggling trade, but safe from the Custom Houses, through occupying neutral water. The capitalist obtained two of these boats, lashed them together, moored them in mid-stream, capped them with a wooden gaming-house, and snapped his fingers at the neighbouring countries. Roulette proceeded merrily for a time; but the exigencies of the tides required the frequent shifting of the anchorage, so that the energies of players from Biarritz and Bayonne were often damped in tedious searching for the actual position of the floating Kursaal. At length a run of ill-luck ruined the capitalist, whose capital appears to have been small. The speculation had a tragic end; and the boats, when I last saw them, were floating, untenanted and coffin-like, on the beautiful Bidasoa.

A SHORT CRUISE IN SCOTCH WATERS.

ONE morning, in the latter end of July, a weary-looking traveller, unwashed, uncombed, and untidy, was standing on the pier at Greenock, waiting for one of the river steamers. That wretched-looking individual was myself. I had come from Liverpool during the night, in the good steamer *Penguin*; and after a rough passage, with little sleep and less comfort,

owing to the crowded state of the vessel, I had landed, portmanteau in hand, glad to escape the indescribable misery of being pent up amongst a herd of sea-sick passengers.

Two days previously I had received the following note from an old school chum:—

“DEAR HARRY—I am going off for a short cruise on Wednesday. Will you come with me? If so, come to Hunter's Quay, and you will find me there. Little Morton is with me. Be sure you get here early on Wednesday, if you cannot be here sooner.—Yours truly,

“TED CONNELL.”

So I had just started off to Liverpool that night; and next evening got on board the *Penguin* for Greenock.

This was not my first visit to the Clyde; so I was quite prepared for having to wait for a steamer to take me on to Hunter's Quay.

“When will there be a steamer to Hunter's Quay?” I asked a porter who was standing near me.

“Y'll git ane the noo,” he says.

Not very clear this, either in language or as to the probable time of departure. Try again! Here is an intelligent native shoe-black, who eyes me very hard, as if he thought I looked like a customer. I repeat my question, and am answered with—

“Shine yer boots, sur?”

At last, after many trials, I discover that there will be a steamboat in half an hour.

Waiting for a train, an omnibus, or a boat is the most tedious waste of time possible; so, to beguile the time, I watch the small, dirty, half-clad newspaper boys amusing themselves, and please myself by imagining that I am studying “Ye manners and ye customs of ye natives.” Deep and profound are the many thoughts that run riot in my busy brain, and form themselves somewhat in this form—

“How is it that Scotch children's feet seem to feel neither cold nor sharp stones? Perhaps it is an equal source of wonder to them how people can walk about with their feet in tight cases. And, after all, theirs is the most natural way—only it is rather too natural. Water must be very scarce here, and soap unknown, judging from the ‘fine crusted’ appearance of the young gentlemen I see about. Perhaps, with so very little clothing to keep them warm, dirt is their best and

warmest friend; and no doubt, in this instance if in no other, here is a friend 'who sticketh closer than a brother.' What becomes of all these filthy little urchins at night? Do they lie down in a heap, heads and heels, like so many young pigs; or have they homes, where they have fathers and mothers to welcome them after their day's work is done? Do they go home and pour into their mother's lap the 'sair earned penny fee,' or do they assemble together and hold an unnatural, horrible, and unearthly orgie, in some dark, remote, and loathsome den? If so, what an edifying sight it must be—how dreadfully suggestive of a certain unmentionable locality, popularly supposed to be peopled by inhabitants not unlike these youngsters, and to be notorious for uncomfortably intense heat, and for highly disagreeable smells, amongst the worst of which the fumes of bad, reeking whisky, and rank, stinking tobacco must form no inconsiderable portion!"

My cogitations are happily cut short by the arrival of the steamboat, on board which I go, along with a crowd of eager, pushing passengers, who, all treading carefully on one another's heels, seemed afraid they would be left behind.

One of the owners of this boat is the most absurdly amusing-looking old fellow imaginable; but is far beyond my powers of description. How he has escaped the eyes of *Punch* is wonderful. Fancy a very, very extra stout puncheon of rum, on two curiously short legs, apparently without knees, or at least without the power of bending them, cased in, literally, a pair of bags—good wide ones, too; great, flat, round feet; probably squeezed flatter by the enormous weight they support. On the top of the puncheon imagine a large suet dumpling, on the top of the dumpling a billycock hat, and you have the best description I can give you of him. His face (?) consists of a long, straight slit across the dumpling, looking as if it had cracked in the boiling—his mouth. A short, flat nob or lump of fat stands duty for a nose; two holes, within each a little ball of fat, which look like—no, which look like nothing excepting *his* eyes. A pair of lamb-chop whiskers—they are not large enough to be called mutton-chop whiskers. The expression of this handsome countenance, owing perhaps to good living, is fatuous. For all that, however, he has a good deal of humour about him; and some rather good stories

are told about him—two of which I will relate.

Probably on account of his extreme stoutness incapacitating him from taking a very active part in the working of the steamboat, he never got promoted to a more dignified position than that of steward, with the supplementary amusement of toddling round the deck collecting the "bawbees" from the passengers, a duty he fulfilled with the greatest amount of deliberate enjoyment.

On one occasion a consequential, bumptious young passenger, being in want of something or other, told him to bring it to him, in rather a mighty, authoritative voice, which, offending our fat friend, he took no notice of. Getting no answer, the young traveller again called out to him, in the same manner, to bring what he wanted, adding, indignantly—

"Why don't you bring it at once? Do you not belong to this boat?"

"No," says the old chap, his little, fat eyes giving an oily twinkle, and snorting his words out like a broken-winded steam-engine—"no; the boat belongs to me."

Another day, a gentleman who was going to dine on board went to him, and telling him so, asked him if he could tell him where he might wash his hands.

"Aye, aye. Come till my cabin, an' I'll gae ye water."

Taking the gentleman into his cabin, he gave him basin, water, and soap; and when the gentleman had washed, he handed him a towel which looked as if, after having become too dirty to dry plates with, it had been used for all sorts of promiscuous work, until it was taxing the imagination to the utmost to suppose it ever had been white. The gentleman took it up gingerly between his finger and thumb, and holding it out at arm's length, said—

"What on earth is this? You don't surely expect me to dry my hands with an infernally filthy rag like this?"

"Houts, mon!" replied our worthy naval friend, without moving a muscle in his face. "Ye'r ill tae please. Ye'r the first ane I ever kent find fault wi' the bit towel, an' there hae been mair than twa hunner calants hae dried their haunds on't afore ye!"

When I got to Hunter's Quay, I found Connell waiting there for me, and all ready to start. His yacht, a cutter of thirty-nine tons, which I will call the *Alert*—and I may as well state here that all the names are

fictitious—was lying at anchor, with her mainsail and topsail hoisted, jib stopped along the bowsprit, and evidently meaning to be off as soon as we got on board. A good-sized leg of mutton, hanging over the taffrail, gave silent but eloquent evidence of due care having been exercised for the comfort and support of the inner man during our intended cruise. As soon as we got on board, the order was given to "up anchor" and make sail. The wind had entirely gone, and the sea was as smooth as a lake, and reflected the clouds as clearly and perfectly as a mirror; but a blue line towards Gourrock showed that a breeze was coming from the east, and with a strong ebb tide in our favour we hoped to get as far as Tarbert, or the Kyles of Bute at least, before night. When the wind reached us we slipped along a good three or four knots an hour, keeping close to the Dunoon shore. After the rough time I had endured coming from Liverpool the night before, I greatly enjoyed the lazy, luxurious pleasure of lying on deck, with nothing to do but gossip and admire the charming beauty of the surrounding scenery. Is there a more perfect picture to be found anywhere than is to be seen from the entrance of the Holy Loch? The splendidly wild, rough hills of Glen Messen, their bold, rocky sides glowing in the mid-day sun, with here and there a deep shadow cast on them by a passing cloud, looking like huge giants guarding the sleeping waters of the loch beneath, which smilingly reflect their frowning forms, and the dark foliage of the Hafton trees contrasting, make this one of the most beautiful nooks on the west coast of Scotland.

As we got farther down, the Clyde looked lovely; ahead of us the island of Bute, with the magnificent Arran mountains behind it, lifting their bold, lofty heads high towards Heaven, wooing the golden clouds to rest on their bosoms; behind us, the sweetly pretty village of Dunoon, nestling so snugly close down to the water's edge, with its venerable old church tower, half hidden amongst trees, on a little hill overlooking the bay, like an ancient patriarch watching over his tribe, forming a perfectly picturesque foreground to the dark hills of Loch Long, blue in the distance, but sharp and clear, and standing out boldly against the bright summer sky. How difficult a task for the artist to paint such a scene without depriving it of its romantic poetry, its peace-

ful, sleepy beauty, which is its greatest charm!

What a delightful place the Bullwood—that is, the part of the coast between Dunoon and Innellan—must be to live in! That it is appreciated as such is evident from the number of nice houses built all the way along it.

One day when talking—"cracking" he called it—to a well-known old man there, whose celebrity has been gained by his skill in growing strawberries, I remarked that it must be very dull living in such a quiet place during the long winter months.

"How can a body weary where he has sic a bonny place aye fornenst his een as that?" he replied, pointing with a sweeping gesture to the charming scene before him. "Every day seems nae longer than an hour, it just passes awa' like a thoct!"

We kept moving on, though slowly, and off Toward Point got our jib-topsail hoisted, to drag us on a little faster. Rothesay looked as beautiful as it always does in fine weather. A few yachts were lying, with their white sails up, waiting for a breeze to be off; but the light air of wind we had did not appear to have reached them, for they were perfectly motionless and their burgees hung idly to the masts. Fearing to get becalmed, we did not enter the bay, but stood straight towards the Kyles of Bute. As we neared the Narrows, we got dead becalmed. Soon, however, we saw a schooner coming towards us, bringing a good stiff breeze with her, and lying well over, with her covering board in the water.

"Better stow that jib-topsail, Sandy," called Connell to his skipper. "There's plenty of wind ahead there for us without it."

No sooner said than done; one of the men was out at the bowsprit end "making-up" the sail, whilst another lowered the halyard. In another moment the squall was on us, and our brave little yacht was lying over until her rail was well buried in the smooth water, before she gathered way, shot forward, leaving a hissing, boiling wake behind her, cutting the water like a knife.

"Get the topsail on deck. Quick, lads!" shouted Ted.

Not too soon. The topmast was bending like a reed, and threatened every instant to go over the side. However, we got it down all right; and the *Alert*, relieved from the top pressure, went along much more

easily, and unless when the gusts struck her, nearly on an upright keel.

There seems to be a perfect nursery for squalls and gusts—a sort of training school for young hurricanes—in Loch Ridden, and just about the Burnt Islands appears to be their favourite playground. They come rushing out of the loch, like so many wild schoolboys indulging in a very riotous game of "Follow my leader." The breeze did not last long, so that it was after sunset before we got to Tarbert. We met great numbers of fishing boats going to Kilbrannon Sound, to put out their herring nets; and the Sound, from Loch Ranza to the Kintyre coast, was crowded with them, forming a beautiful and picturesque sight, with their brown sails, and the magnificent Arran Mountains glowing with the last parting rays of the dying sun.

The entrance to the little harbour of Loch Tarbert is very narrow and curious, causing not a little excitement to the nervous passenger, who, not aware of the depth of the water close up to the rocks and islands which block the channel, when he sees the bowsprit within a few feet of the land naturally thinks it is time to be looking out for a good landing spot, and prepares himself for a clear jump on to the most inviting rock when the final crash comes.

Once inside, the danger is over, as it is so completely land-locked and surrounded with hills, that it is more like a dock than anything else, and is equally well sheltered from wind and sea.

Early next morning we were awakened by the loud voices of the fishermen close alongside; and, going on deck, a strange and uncommon—at least in any other part of the world—scene met our gaze. The bay, which last night was so quiet and deserted, was now crowded with herring smacks, and every moment many more were coming in. The little pier was covered with boxes for putting the herrings into; and crowds of men and women were busy unloading the boats and filling the boxes.

One of our men went ashore in the punt to get some fish for breakfast, and came back with forty, for which he had paid one shilling. I asked him if there had been a good fishing the night before, and he replied, grinning all over his face—

"Aye, there has that. There's a heap o' them on the quay, as high as Ailsa Craig."

As soon as we could, we hurried ashore

to investigate proceedings. There, sure enough, on the pier, was a young mountain of herrings piled up—not quite so high as Ailsa Craig, certainly; but so high that one could not see over it. Beside this heap was another one, not quite so high, composed of coarse salt; and a lot of girls, bare-footed, bare-headed, and only half dressed, were cleaning the herrings with marvellous rapidity; and, as each was done, they threw it to the salters, who, in their turn, passed them on to the packers; and thus a wonderful number were stowed away in casks, ready for shipping, in a very short space of time.

The girls who clean the herrings are generally young, and always dirty, as might be expected from their avocation. Little Morton pronounced them "a *scal* lot;" but, on being reproved for such a vile pun, apologized for his error, and made matters worse by adding that the "'Erring fever was catching." These charming and captivating young ladies rejoice in the euphonious name of "Gutters," which, if not a very refined title, is at least a most expressive one.

The fishermen told us that this was the best haul they had taken this season, and seemed in high spirits generally at their good fortune. But a few of the discontented ones said it was "Nae that gude," and drew very disparaging comparisons betwixt the present and the former fishing days. According to them, the "good old days" of fishing are not likely ever to return; but the reasons they give for the decrease are so conflicting, and so much at variance one with another, that it appeared to me they knew as little about the cause as other people.

The life these men lead is a hard but lazy one. At first glance, this seems a contradiction; but on looking more closely into it, the truth of my assertion will be plainly seen. After discharging their cargo of fish, and overhauling their nets, they have nothing to do until the afternoon, when they make a start for the fishing ground. If there is any wind they sail, of course, and therefore, in that case, have nothing to do which can fairly be called work; but if it is so calm that they require to row, their labour in the hot summer days is hard and tedious. This is, however, seldom the case, as there is usually enough wind to take such light vessels the short distance they have to go.

Then, after their nets are out, they sleep until dawn—that is to say, with “drift” nets; with trawl nets it is different. So far, the work is light; but the hardness of it consists in exposure in all sorts of weather, and the constant discomfort of miserable lodging, with coarse, poor, and the commonest of food. Drinking amongst such men is, as might be expected, not uncommon; but there are great numbers who are “Good Templars,” who never taste spirits; and, taking them as a class, I am inclined to think they are steadier, and more sober and respectable, than their equals employed ashore. Sometimes they make large sums of money in a few nights. A banker told me he had often seen them come to his bank to cash cheques varying in value from £3 or £4 to £80 or £100 at a time, the proceeds of a few hours’ fishing. As only four usually go in each smack, this would be a very nice thing for each. It seems very uncertain, however—like gold-digging; but no doubt the spark of gambling existing in it makes it more enticing and exciting.

It was no easy matter getting the yacht out of the bay, in the light wind which was blowing straight into the loch; for the fishing boats were clustered very thickly round about us, leaving us barely room to work through without coming into collision with some of them; but, by careful dodging, we contrived to get clear, after one or two close shaves, or, as Morton said, “narrow squeaks for it.” Although so calm inside, when we got into Loch Fyne we found a nice fresh breeze blowing, and reached Loch Gair, where we intended to remain for a day’s fishing, in less than two hours.

Loch Gair is another of the many completely land-locked and snug little sheltered lochs which abound in Scotland, and which help to make yachting so much pleasanter there than in the south. The anchorage, in from four to six fathoms, is first-rate; and, as there is capital fishing to be got with hand-lines, it is one of the jolliest places in Loch Fyne to stay for a day or two at. The village consists of about a dozen huts—miserable little dens—inhabited in a promiscuous sort of manner, fishermen with their wives and families sharing equally and fairly their lodgings with cows, hens, ducks, and even a few goats. In one hut I noticed a sheep lying in the doorway, contentedly basking in the sunshine, and evidently

thinking himself monarch of all he surveyed. Then there is a church, a school-house, and an inn, to which is attached a general sort of shop, which deals chiefly in hams and fishing nets—at least, so I fancied when I went to inspect it. At the inn, fowls, bread, potatoes, and oat-cakes can be bought; but beef or mutton is seldom to be got.

At the head of the loch stands a large, ugly square house—“The Hoose” the natives call it. On the left point, as you enter the loch, is a small square building, something between a tower and a dog-kennel, occupied by four fishermen—one for each corner, like so many “little Jack Horners;” and close to it are two or three residences, evidently designed by naval talent, being old boats turned keel uppermost, covered with old tarred sails, and with a chimney stuck at one end. Altogether, considering how near it is to towns of importance, this is one of the most primitive places imaginable, and is well worthy of a visit.

Next morning we went off fishing, taking two of the hands, Sandy the skipper and Donald, to row and take us to the best fishing ground. We had first-rate sport, catching twenty-two dozen whittings and other fish. I hooked a tolerable-sized eel, and, not liking the job of taking him off the hook, gave him to Donald, saying—

“Here, Donald, you take that nasty slimy, wriggling thing off, will you? I’d as soon handle a snake as touch him.”

“They whiles bite you hard,” says Donald, as he took the hook out of its mouth, “and are terrible savage. I ance kent a man wha caught ane sae lang, that when it’s heed was at the bows its tail was ower the stern; an’ it was that savage like that it chased him up an’ doon the boat.”

“By Jove!” cried Morton, laughing loudly, “that’s a good one.”

Connell and I said nothing, hoping to hear more.

“Aye,” continued Donald, “there’s nae killing them, either. I kent a man wha’ very near lost his finger by lifting the heed of ane he had cut off twa or three days afore. He picked it up, an’ it bit him sae hard that it near took the finger aff him.”

Morton roared, and Connell and I had hard work to keep from joining him. By way of drawing Donald out, I suppose, Connell said—

“I know it is almost past belief the

length of time an eel will live out of the water; and, to show you that such is the case, I will tell you what I once saw. I caught a small fresh water eel, and put it into a bucket—without any water, remember. I forgot all about it for two days; and, when I recollected it, I took the bucket down to the stream, intending to wash it out, as it had quite a disagreeable smell. Well, when I threw the eel into the water, it lay perfectly still for a few minutes, and then, to my surprise, swam slowly away. You may think this is a yarn, but I can assure you it is perfectly true."

Rather a curious thing happened. Morton hooked a large fish, and broke his line when pulling it up, losing, of course, the hooks and lead-sinker. So he got two large, heavy pocket-knives, and tied them on as sinkers. Much to his disgust, he again broke his line, this time losing the knives. A few minutes afterwards, Connell caught a gurnet; and, to our surprise, found Morton's line, the two knives, and the hooks fast in his mouth.

Donald, as usual, took care to improve the opportunity by giving us another experience—

"There was a man lost his line and hooks with a big lythe, over on the other side there, one day; and that night he caught the great muckle fish, wi' the hook and line in its mouth, when he was fishing wi' his net on this side o' the loch. I didna' see him catch it mysel', but I saw the fish a wee while afterwards," he added, as conclusive proof of the truth of his story.

Soon afterwards I caught a dog-fish, and nothing would please Sandy and Donald but that they must cut off the unfortunate thing's tail, and let it go. Poor, miserable thing!—it could not keep below water, although it struggled hard to dive.

"I've seen them tie a bottle to their tails," said Sandy, "and then heave them intil the sea again."

"They whiles get awfu' lots o' them in the nets," said Donald, coming to the scratch again, and determined not to lose an opportunity. "Some chaps I ken got a fearfu' lot o' them, and tied a' their tails thegither and hove them overboard. There were sic a lot o' them, an' they were that heavy, that they had to hoist them ower the side wi' the jib-halyards. They made a terrible splashing when they got in the water, each ane pulling and rugging in a different direc-

tion frae the others, and maist tugging the tails aff ane anither."

Next day we started for Inveraray, with all sails set; but the wind was so light that, after keeping on all day, we only got as far as Furness; and it took us the whole of the following day to get to Inveraray. Although we got on so slowly, we enjoyed our sail—or rather drift—very much, and had ample time to admire the beautiful scenery of Loch Fyne. Excepting fishing boats, of which there were a good many, the only sort of craft we saw was a coasting schooner, which we passed off Kenmure, as it was vainly trying to make its way up the loch.

"What a tedious business it must be, sailing in such a washing tub as that is!" I remarked, as we lay on deck smoking, and lazily watching its progress.

"Yes," said Connell; "it must be slow work, even in the most favourable weather; but in light winds like this it must become almost unbearable. But I suppose the fellows on board don't care much, as they get paid all the same, and probably comfort themselves by thinking they are doing as well as they can."

"That reminds me of a tale I heard once about a clergyman, somewhere in the north of Scotland," chimed in Morton, "who was on his trial gallop—sermon, I mean. He was naturally anxious to give a good account of himself, and please his congregation, in order to get the church; and was therefore preaching away in great form, as he thought. They, however, seemed to be of a different opinion; for after he had been holding forth for over an hour, he saw his long-suffering congregation quietly slipping out, one by one, and his congregation growing 'small by degrees and beautifully less,' until he began to fear he would at last have to be contented with only the precentor and elders for an audience. So, stopping in the middle of his discourse, he thus addressed them—

"My dear brethren, bide a wee while langer. I'm maist finished noo. An' hae a wee mair patience wi' me, an' listen, *for I'm doing my vara best.*"

"I expect, if that old hooker could speak, it would offer some such apology."

Inveraray is more dependent on fine weather for its beauty than any place that I know of, even in Scotland, where the sun is at a great premium, not only on account of the rarity and shortness of its visits, but also

for its necessity to the character of the scenery. And for once we were fortunate in having most favourable weather for our trip. Remembering it as I had seen it on my previous visit—the home-coming of the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne—I could hardly believe it to be the same place. During that memorable week of storms, I never had a chance of seeing or judging of its attractions, and left it with a conviction that it was a region of perpetual rain, wind, and mist. That wretched week will long be remembered by Clyde yachtsmen—who had all mustered at Inveraray to welcome and do honour to the fair daughter of their much-loved Queen—as being one of the most tempestuous ever known at that season of the year.

Now the whole aspect of the country seemed changed; and instead of cold, blinding rain, and fierce, unrelenting storms of wind and sleet, the air was warm and genial with the summer sun, and everything looked fresh and bright. The walks about the Castle grounds and through the magnificent avenues of trees are delightful. The Castle, in my opinion, is badly situated, being too low, and consequently does not show off to advantage the grand but rather heavy style of architecture; but it is such a temptingly snug, warm, sheltered spot, and has so many sweetly pretty views from it, that I am not surprised at the site being chosen in preference to others, perhaps more commanding.

As for the town of Inveraray, there is little or nothing to say about it, excepting that it is Inveraray, and has a gaol, a few churches, a great many hotels and dram-shops, and, for the size of the place, a very fine development of dirt. It is by no means a desirable town even to visit; and is not the place I would choose to pass my life in, when tired of the excitement and bustle of "the wicked world."

Loch Fyne, above Inveraray, is very grand, more so than the lower part of the Loch, and presents many attractions for the artist or tourist. One glen in particular is very fine, with high peaks and nearly precipitous sides, rough and rocky. It has been christened the very appropriate but rather naughty name of Hell's Glen, which to a certain extent describes what it is like.

On our return to Inveraray, after sailing round the head of the loch, I found a telegram waiting for me, and found I would

have to go home as soon as possible, much to my annoyance, as I had hoped to see more of the "bonnie Clyde" before leaving. However, there was no help for it, and we decided on starting early next morning, so as, if possible, to reach Gourrock that night in time to allow me to catch the night train to the south. We were fortunate in getting a strong breeze from the west, and with jib-headed topsail set, we got along at a good eight knots an hour.

Near the Otter Spit, we met a small yacht of some eight or ten tons, evidently with enough to do. Her jib sheets appeared to have carried away, and she had broached to, and was getting a pretty good knocking about; whilst her crew, so far as we could see consisting of only a man and boy, were trying to make things snug.

"That little boat is catching it hot," remarked Connell, "and if they don't look smart, they will come to grief on board her."

"They seem very short-handed," I said, "if there are no more on board than we see; and if there were, surely they would be on deck before now. Should we run down and give them assistance?"

As I spoke, they took their jib down, and with their foresail aback, lay to, and bent on new jib sheets. Then up went the jib again, and they were once more holding their course.

"Do you remember that little ten-ton boat that Cooper had?" asked Morton. "He told me a yarn about her that rather amused me. She was rather tender, you know; and as he only kept a small boy in her, he was always very short-handed, and often, when it came on to blow suddenly, he had no time to reef, and had to run for it. Well, one very dark night he was caught, when off Toward Point, by a stiff breeze, and sending the boy to the tiller, he managed to get the topsail off her all right; but as he was only going to Rothesay, he did not think it worth while to reef, even had he been able to do so, which I rather doubt. So he had to be contented with lowering the foresail and tricing up the tack of the mainsail. The wind kept on increasing, until at last it was as much as Cooper could do to sail her, by watching carefully when the squalls came, and shaking her up in the wind. She was close-hauled. His boy was a capital, plucky little chap, and backed him up first-rate. There was to be a regatta at Rothesay next day, so the bay was full of yachts; and

Cooper began to funk running into one in the dark; but, fortunately for him, it began to thunder, and the flashes of lightning were so frequent and bright that he was able to steer by them. Every now and then, after he got into the bay, when a flash came, he would see that he was running right straight into a boat; and on each occasion Cooper, who has a bad habit of garbishing his language when excited, would say to himself, but aloud—

“‘What a d——d fool I am!’ or, ‘Well, I am a d——d fool!’ when he saw how nearly he had run into a yacht or coaster.

“Much to his surprise, he noticed his small sailor lying on the deck, crying; and, on asking him what was the matter, got for reply only—

“‘Oh, sir, we’ll baith be drowned!—we’ll baith be drowned!’

“However, I suppose a more elevated termination to their careers was in store for them, for they got safely landed at last, all right, after many narrow escapes. When they had stowed the sails, &c., Cooper asked his “crew” what he had been in such a fright about, and the wee chap answered—

“‘Oh, sir, I wasna’ feared for the wind nor the thunner; but ye aye kept on calling yersel’ a d——d fule; and I began to be feared ye were richt!’

“Not so bad for the youngster, was it?”

We got to Greenock before seven o’clock, giving one plenty of time to catch the train. So I had reluctantly to say good-bye to my friends and to the *Alert*, after promising Connell to go with him next summer for a longer cruise to the North—a pleasure which I have long looked forward to, but which I have never had either the time or the opportunity of indulging in.

DOCTOR MIDDLETON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “A DESPERATE CHARACTER.”

CHAPTER V.

SHORTLY after our return to Carlton-terrace, I was appointed interne, or resident pupil, of our hospital; and entered upon the discharge of my important duties with a considerable amount of satisfaction and a good deal of diffidence.

St. Cuthbert's was a special institution, entirely supported by voluntary contributions. It was supposed to contain one hun-

dred beds, although frequently not above half that number were occupied, in consequence of lack of funds.

When I say it was a special hospital, I do not mean that its benefits were restricted to the sufferers from any particular class of disease, for all sorts of maladies were treated within its walls; but no patient was admitted unless certified as belonging to a particular sect—no matter which—by a minister of the same denomination.

The hospital authorities had not always been as strict—for, if the truth must be told, they were rather of a proselytizing turn; but, some time previous to my connection with the establishment, an accident case had been brought in one evening late, and was quickly followed by the wife or mother of the sufferer, accompanied by a clerical gentleman of her own persuasion, which was not that of the patrons of the institution.

A very distressing scene ensued. The secretary, an excellent fellow, was bound to refuse admission to the woman's ghostly adviser; who, on his part, vehemently insisted on seeing the patient; and walked up and down the entrance hall for some time in a state of the greatest excitement, wringing his hands, and exclaiming—

“Can this be a Christian country? How can these men pretend to call themselves Christians?”

Of course a mob collected, and it was feared the place would be wrecked—which most likely would have been the case had not a messenger been despatched by a back way for the police.

After a very exciting scene, the clerical gentleman was at last persuaded to take his departure, on the joint assurance of the secretary and the residents that the man was not dangerously injured, and would be discharged in the morning.

Up to that period, members of all religious persuasions, or of none, had been freely taken in; but were debarred the privilege of any ghostly ministration, excepting what the chaplain of the institution might please to give them.

After that night, however, it was resolved that no person should be admitted unless he or she was certified to be a member of a certain denomination—to wit, that of the managers themselves.

Nevertheless, mistakes not unfrequently occurred.

In my own time, for instance, a man was

taken into the house professing to be a St. Cuthbertite, and underwent a serious operation in the surgical ward. After a while ugly symptoms made their appearance, and the man got frightened, and confessed that he was an impostor.

Of course his request to see a clergyman of the sect to which he really belonged was inadmissible, and he was actually carried on a mattress across the street to a private house opposite, where he received the spiritual consolation he desired, and was carried back again—to die.

I joined St. Cuthbert's, in ignorance of its limited capacity for teaching, in consequence of the Professor to whom I had been introduced being one of its physicians; and I esteemed him too highly to think of abandoning the benefit of his tuition for even the largest field of observation afforded in the city.

Such was the institution to which I had been appointed resident pupil soon after our return to Carlton-terrace.

There was a *bête noire* in the establishment of which I had heard much long before my acceptance of office; but I had fully made up my mind not to be frightened by it. I am ungallant enough to admit that I refer to the lady superintendent, who had been the terror of all previous, as she has been of all subsequent internes.

She was a widow.

"As if she could possibly be anything else, having once been married," sarcastically remarked my associate one day, when she had been unusually aggravating.

She was tall, and gaunt, and middle-aged, and was never seen by any one without her bonnet; indeed, it was confidently affirmed in the establishment that she slept in it, but for this I cannot vouch.

The nurses in the children's ward used to say that whenever she came in the milk went sour directly. No doubt they exaggerated; but that she possessed a most vinegar-like aspect cannot be denied.

As an externe, I had never come in contact with the lady; although I had frequently seen her at a distance, which I had no desire to lessen.

I have no doubt she could have discharged her duties to the hospital without so much gratuitous acidity as she was accustomed on all occasions to display; but perhaps it was constitutional, and she could not help it.

The residents' quarters at St. Cuthbert's consisted of two rooms, a sitting and a bedroom, the furniture of both being of the most primitive description.

The carpet of the former was cocoa-nut fibre, of the latter nil.

But I had never been accustomed to luxuries, and did not complain.

Not so my associate, however, Robert M'Lachlan, whose father was a rich merchant of Scottish extraction, but long resident in Dublin.

It was certainly not the bond of a common country that made me take so great a fancy to M'Lachlan, for he had never been out of Dublin in his life.

Perhaps it was his happy, good-natured disposition and pleasing appearance that attracted me.

I never had brother or sister, and knew not the sweetness of fraternal love.

As our acquaintance ripened, I began to call him David, and he reciprocated by calling me Jonathan.

I was quite unable to fathom the nature of my feelings then; now, I understand it plainly enough.

I believe everybody loved him—everybody, that is, except the lady superintendent, who hated him with absolute hatred.

St. Cuthbert's was not a pleasant place to live in, although it might have been made comfortable enough.

Possibly some of the former residents may have given her ladyship a bad opinion of medical students in general; but surely it was questionable policy on her part to condemn the whole class for the shortcomings of some individuals.

Our attendant, as I soon learned to my disgust, was none other but the dead-house man—a horribly dirty, sulky wretch, whose duties, in addition to washing up our plates and cups, and making our beds, were to carry the coals into the house.

I believe he never washed his hands from one year's end to the other—except, perhaps, when rinsing the pupils' tea-things, which he kept in a cupboard at the end of the dark passage that led to our quarters.

I had the curiosity to look at the towel he used for washing-up: it was black.

"This is perfectly abominable, M'Lachlan," I exclaimed to my fellow-resident. "I shall go at once to Mrs. Brown and complain about it."

"Do," he replied; "and ask her to let

Biddy attend to us instead—or the surgery boy, at least.”

I waited on the lady superintendent in her own rooms, which were sumptuously furnished, compared to ours. She received me with the utmost frigidity.

When I had made my complaint she spoke.

“John,” she said, “has always waited on the pupils ever since the hospital was opened, and none of them ever complained before. The shilling a week they each pay him forms part of his wages.”

“I will gladly pay him two to keep away,” I said, “and so will Mr. M'Lachlan.”

“I have no power in the matter,” replied the lady—which was not true.

“But if I—if we are willing to pay him all the same, will you permit Biddy to take his place in attending us?”

The lady superintendent gave a little scream.

“Let a woman wait on the pupils!” here she held up her hands in horror at the bare idea of such an incongruity.

“Why not?” I asked. “Surely she is old enough to be our mother, and plain enough to frighten the most ardent suitor.”

Her ladyship shook her head.

“She has quite as much to do already as she can manage.”

“The surgery boy?”

“His time is fully occupied.”

“I believe it is contrary to the rules of the hospital for the pupils to employ a char-woman or servant of their own?”

“Quite so.”

“Then we must continue to let John wash up our tea-things, make our beds, and wait on us generally?”

The lady superintendent inclined her head affirmatively.

“But, madam,” I persisted, “have you ever thought for a moment what his ordinary duties are?”

“No pupil ever complained before.”

“That is nothing to the purpose, madam. How would you like to drink out of a cup he had washed, or sleep in a bed he had made with his filthy hands?”

Her ladyship shuddered.

“I trust the cases are quite different,” she said.

“Pardon me, madam, if I cannot see it. If you are a lady, Mr. M'Lachlan and myself are gentlemen.”

Mrs. Brown smiled incredulously.

“No pupil ever complained before,” she repeated.

“Then you will not accede to my request?” I said, rising and moving towards the door.

“I have no power in the matter, Mr. Cochrane.”

“Very well,” I replied. “I shall appeal to the committee; and, in the meantime, we can wait upon ourselves.”

The lady superintendent shrugged her shoulders.

“Good morning, madam.”

But she did not condescend to take any notice.

“It's no use,” I said to Bob on my return. “Old vinegar is determined upon making us keep on with John.”

“I shall wait on myself,” replied M'Lachlan.

“So shall I. And I told her I would appeal to the committee.”

Now, the head man in that venerable body was a certain Rev. Mr. White, a pompous, empty-pated noodle, who, like the lady superintendent, looked upon medical students in general, and resident pupils in particular, as a necessary evil, to be kept at as remote a distance as possible from his august person; and when I went into the board-room he snubbed me most unmercifully.

“No pupil ever complained before,” he said, repeating the very words used by the lady superintendent.

“Well, Mr. White,” I replied, “I am not a child—I am six and twenty. When I make a reasonable complaint to a body of gentlemen, I expect to receive the treatment due to a gentleman at their hands.”

Perhaps my speech was too egotistical, but I was annoyed by his manner.

“Certainly,” acquiesced several members of the committee.

“No pupil ever complained before,” reiterated the Rev. Mr. White.

“Sir,” I said, addressing that personage, “how would you like to eat off a plate touched by John with his hands, or drink out of a cup which he had pretended to wash?”

“You exaggerate, sir,” pompously said the Rev. Mr. White.

“Gentlemen,” I said, turning my back on his reverence, and addressing myself to the other members of the committee, “I leave the matter in your hands. Whatever your

decision may be, that man shall never enter our rooms again."

What was said in the board-room after my departure I cannot say; but no alteration was made. And next morning, before we were up, I heard John fumbling about our sitting-room as usual.

"John!" I called out to him, "come here."

He opened the bed-room door, and looked in.

"Well?" said he.

"You can go," I replied; "and you need not trouble yourself about us again. We dispense with your valuable services from to-day."

"I aint going to lose my money," he said, doggedly.

"You shall have your money, my man; but you shall not touch a thing belonging to us from this time, nor put your foot inside these doors."

"Sure, I don't care if I don't—there!"

And he retired, banging the doors after him.

I had conquered. John's reign in the hospital was at an end. By the Professor's intervention, Biddy was instructed to wait upon us; and soon afterwards Master John was discharged for insolence to the lady superintendent herself.

As I have said, my fellow-resident, Robert M'Lachlan, was handsome. The six months of our residency had nearly expired; and one evening Robert and I were sitting in our room alone. He was reading at the table, leaning, in an easy attitude, with his head on his hand. I was sitting opposite to him, thinking of home; for I was uneasy about my father, from whom I had not heard for some time.

Presently he smiled at something in the book.

"What a beautiful face! He is certainly too handsome for a man."

His figure, too, was perfection; and he had, moreover, the rare knack of dressing well. His clothes looked as if he had been born in them—they fitted him so exactly.

I was rather proud of my own muscular development; but I was clumsy and awkward-looking by the side of Robert M'Lachlan. He was a perfect Apollo. He smiled, and I suddenly discovered that I was in love.

Was she really David's sister? I had only seen her once—passed her on the road

one day; but my heart had throbbed, and I had pictured her sweet face to myself a thousand times at least since then.

In love! and that, too, with a European! Good gracious! Suppose she would not accompany me on my return home! What a fool I was making of myself! And yet I felt that I could not give her up—that she was my fate, and must, sooner or later, be mine.

What nonsense! I did not even know who she was. I had only seen her once. But what a marvellous likeness!

"David," I suddenly exclaimed, "is your sister like you?"

"Eh—what?" he said, looking up with a troubled expression from his book. "What did you say, Jonathan?"

"Is your sister like you, boy?"

"Yes, she is—that is, she is reckoned like me, I believe, or I am like her; I don't know which. Why?"

"Nothing," I replied, and I did not speak an untruth, for at the moment I was not conscious of any definite thought. I was in a reverie.

Yes, David's face recalled the fairy vision; and that was, doubtless, the reason why I had so often caught myself staring at him, and wondered why.

"Is she engaged?" was my next inquiry, almost unconsciously spoken.

"Who?" he asked, looking more and more puzzled. "What on earth are you talking about, old Jonathan?"

"Your sister, David—is she engaged?"

"Not that I know of," replied my friend. "But what's that to you? You've never seen her, have you?"

"I am not sure, boy; and yet I think I have."

"Bless you!—she'd never have anything to say to an old fellow like you."

"Old! I'm only just turned six and twenty."

We fell into serious conversation after that.

"Are you bound to go back?" presently inquired my friend; "because if you are, it will be no go with the mum or the governor either. They'd never consent to Emmy transporting herself."

"That might be arranged."

"Tell you what, old fellow, you'll come out and spend the day with us to-morrow."

"We can't both leave here together, you know, David."

"Ask Bird to stop in for you."

"He's not to be depended on, boy."

"He'll be right enough if you don't leave him any spirits."

"Her ladyship won't like it."

"Marry her ladyship to a Chinaman! What need you care about her?"

"I don't care anything about her, of course; but it's only a week to the time of our leaving this place for good, and I shouldn't like to get into disgrace with the authorities."

"You're a nincompoop."

"Thank you, David."

"Well, so you are. But, talk about leaving, I'll tell you what I mean to do first."

"What? Some mischief, I'll be bound."

"No; I mean to give a regular good spread to the fellows."

"I'd advise you not, David. Suppose there should be a row."

"I'll guarantee there sha'n't."

"Ah! you are a responsible-looking personage."

"I should think I was," replied Bob, drawing himself up to his full height, which was five feet ten inches, and expanding his chest to its full extent.

"Who do you intend asking?"

"Bull, for one."

He was a "chronic"—that is, had been mooning about the hospital and school for six or seven years, and had been plucked several times at the Hall, although he had contrived to obtain an ordinary degree in the University.

"Not that fellow, David; you know how the Professor dislikes him."

"What's the odds? He's great value. By the way, do you know what he said to-day?"

"Something absurd, I dare say."

"Rather. I had been reading 'Tristram Shandy,' and had just thrown the book on the table, when he came in and took it up. He opened it in the middle, and, after skimming over a few pages, tossed it away, saying, in his richest brogue, 'I don't think much of them Yorick's Thravels.' What do you think of that for an A.B. of T.C.D.?"

"The poor fellow is not two degrees removed from an idiot. Don't ask him."

"I shall."

"Very well. Who else?"

"Bird."

"Worse and worse, David."

"Not at all—he's great value. Do you know he gave us a new version of how she

locked him out?—he went and blew her up this time."

Bird was the hospital apothecary, and professed to have been once locked out by the lady superintendent, and had to break a window in order to get into his rooms; but every time he told the tale he gave a new version of the affair—which was believed never to have occurred at all, but nevertheless afforded much amusement to the students, who loved to draw him out.

"Who else, David?"

"Biceps, Slim, &c., &c."

"Very well, boy, they'll do. I shall ask Woodward and the barrister; they're steady fellows, and will ballast you youngsters. But, mind you, neither cards nor spirits."

"Neither one nor the other," replied David, solemnly.

Three days more, and we had fulfilled the days of our service in the Residency, without having been involved in any serious affray with Mrs. Brown: skirmishes there had been innumerable, but no open breach.

David had a liberal allowance from his father, and expressed his determination of "doing the thing handsomely."

The visitors arrived in due course. Tea passed off quietly, several songs had been sung, and everything was going on comfortably, when Mr. Bull all at once produced a pack of cards, and began to shuffle and deal them out on the table.

"I am very sorry," I exclaimed, "but when I came in here I passed my word to the committee that there should be no card-playing allowed."

"I suppose I'm nobody!" said David.

"I should think, Bob, you would not encourage any one to use them, when you know the engagement I am under."

"What does it matter?" sneered Bull, continuing to shuffle his cards. "Never mind him, Mac."

"I shall be under the painful necessity of reporting you to the committee, Mr. Bull, if you do not put up your cards at once."

"Put them up, Bully, boy," said David, coming to my assistance.

Bull obeyed, and for a minute or two there was complete silence in the room.

"This is awfully jolly," then exclaimed a wonderfully clever poor fellow, since dead, who bore the name of "Biceps," which had been given to him, on the lusus a non lucendo principle, on account of his want of muscular development.

"Come, Biceps," said I, "sing us another song, old fellow."

But before he could comply with my request there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," shouted several of the fellows.

The hall porter put in his head.

"You're wanted, av ye plaze, Mr. Coch-rane, sir, directly."

"What is it?" said I.

"A man, sir. He says it's a case of life an' death, sir."

I whispered to Woodward—

"You'll keep order, Charley, while I'm away? I sha'n't be longer than I can help."

He nodded.

On arriving in the hall, I found a thick-set, middle-aged man waiting for me, who immediately called out—

"Oh, doctor dear, for the love av glory, make haste. Shure, it's dying for ye she is, the crayer; an' bit or sup hash't crossed her lips these two days."

"What's the matter, man?"

"Me wife it is, yer honner," he continued, seeing my look of astonishment.

"Well?"

"Och, shure! av ye don't make haste it's kilt she'll be intirely. Doctor, jewel, make as much haste as ivver ye can, for the love av glory. Make haste, an' save her; for it's the good wife she's bin to me!—save her sowl this night."

TABLE TALK.

WHILE the oyster has for a great length of time been an object of care and cultivation, many other fish, which from their habits may appropriately form the subjects of successful cultivation, have been neglected. Mr. Frank Buckland, the advocate of fish culture, has for some years been employed on experimental culture of river fish; and this year, again, his museum forms part of the International Exhibition. Mr. Sachs, late secretary to the Piscatorial Society, has helped Mr. Buckland; and the following angling societies have contributed to the Exhibition:—The True Waltonians show seventeen cases; the Piscatorial Society, twenty-four; the Amicable Waltonians, four; the Alliance, six; while the United Society of Anglers and several private persons have also contributed some specimens. Among the fish shown may be mentioned some

splendid Thames trout—one of 14lb. 9oz. This fish is also represented by a fine cast, coloured by Mr. H. L. Rolfe, and as it lies in a basket on some straw, it looks so like the real fish that many are obliged to touch it before they can be convinced that it is only a cast. The largest trout ever known to have been taken in the Thames was captured some fifteen years ago at Shepperton, and weighed 16lb.; one was taken at Marlow about six years ago which weighed 15lb.; while the two largest taken last season weighed together 23lb., their several weights being almost equally divided. Some good pike are also shown, one weighing 28lb. Of carp are exhibited a case of five beautiful fish, weighing in the aggregate 32lb. 5oz. One taken at Bushey Park pond some time ago, weighing 15½lb., is also shown. The collection, besides these, contains a curious Albino perch caught in the River Lea; three magnificent rudd, 5lb. 6oz.; five bream, 23lb.; two carp, 11lb.; a perch of 3½lb.; a barbel, 9lb.; two grayling caught in the Itchen—one of 1lb. 14oz., the other of 1lb. 13oz. Many other fine fish are also shown, the whole forming, perhaps, the finest collection of "London fish" ever brought together. These specimens, and the fish-hatching operations in working order to be seen at the Exhibition, are by no means the least interesting objects there.

"JAMES JENKINS," said a national school-master to his pupil, "what is an average?" "A thing, sir," answered the scholar promptly, "that hens lay eggs upon." "Why do you say *that*, you silly boy?" replied the pedagogue. "Because, sir," said the youth, "I heard a gentleman say the other day as a hen would lay, on an average, a hundred and twenty eggs a year."

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No. 285.

June 14, 1873.

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DOGHERTY'S COURTSHIP.

A RUSTIC SKETCH.—IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.



WHEN Dick got to bed, sleep refused to lend him her balm. He turned from side to side for fully two hours before he could close an eye, and had begun seriously to contemplate going out in his shirt, in defiance of the cold, and climbing to the top of a tall poplar that stood near the house, to try if

he could catch a glimpse—for it was now gray day—of the roof, or even the chimney of Nannie's residence. But just as he had begun to revolve these bold projects in his mind, the beloved Morpheus waved her magic wand over him, and he sank to sleep—to sleep and to dream: need I say of Nannie?

First he thought he was on the top of the poplar singing "Oh, would I were a bird!" or some such pathetic melody, in the direction of Nannie's house; then he thought he was sitting at the root of a tree somewhere, sighing and wishing for the presence of his charmer; then he thought she appeared before him mysteriously, and that he clasped her in his arms, and told her of his love, and that she vowed her heart belonged to him and him alone; and that she

swore, as sure as there was a bill on a crow, that she would for ever remain faithful; and that then the tree instantly changed itself into the hymeneal altar, and that they went through the solemn ceremony of marriage, and that he walked down the aisle with his blushing young bride, and that somebody hit him on the back of the head with his open hand as he passed, and that he turned round and brought *his* open hand a thwack along the jaw of the supposed offender, who proved to be a perfectly innocent man; and that he then walked on with a magnanimous air, and shortly found himself explaining to Nannie his attitude on the poplar tree, by way of convincing her of his deep-rooted affection; and that very soon after, Nannie disappeared unaccountably, and that thereupon a strange voice seemed to say in his ears—"Dick, Dick, git up, ye lazy divil ye; it's near nine o'clock;" all of which singular medley ended in his wakening to find that he had kicked half of the bedclothes off himself, and that his mother was the possessor of the strange voice which had requested him to arise, and had warned him of the lateness of the hour.

Dick, contrary to his habit, took little or no breakfast that morning. He, moreover, put on a pair of his father's boots for his own, sallied into the byre for a horse, ran against the stockyard gate, and successfully managed divers other untoward feats of abstraction—the invariable results of love.

All that day he thought of nothing but Nannie, Nannie, Nannie. How and when was he to see her again? What would he do if she did not love him? What would he *not* do if— Oh, joy! she did love him. I verily believe that, if Nannie had required Dick to stand on his head on a clothes-line post, at any hour during that day, he would have stepped up and made the endeavour with a smile of pleasure upon his features; and would have broken his neck, with a heart and three-quarters, to please and gain

but one smile from her. However, Nannie did not come to make the request, and Dick had therefore not the opportunity of rivaling the Count de Lorge.

After passing, on the whole, a very miserable day, he determined, come what would, to see Nannie again that very night.

To pass another night without beholding once more that angelic face of hers was a thing he simply could not contemplate. No, he must see her that night, and, if possible, give her a hint of how he felt about her.

Having duly arranged his toilet, therefore, he leisurely proceeded, at about seven o'clock, towards the residence of the beloved, planning as he jogged along how he would see her without going into the house—for into the house he was resolved not to go if it could possibly be avoided. The old man, Nannie's father, was about as morose a specimen of the paterfamilias as was to be found in the country side; and had, moreover, the strongest objection to young fellows coming into his house after his daughters.

The latter, he thought, should never think of such a thing as courtship or marriage; and as for anybody having the audacity to come and sit down at his hearth who wanted to rob him of his daughters, it was monstrous, rascally, villainous. If they married while he lived—he was now about seventy, and was as hardy as a mallard—he would renounce them altogether, and leave them without as much as would buy them a bap if their tongue was hanging out.

Such were the old man's vows respecting a breach of his daughters' celibacy. No wonder, then, that Dick felt shy about going into the house. All the excuses for doing so that he could frame fell to the ground with second thoughts, so that he actually arrived at Nannie's house without having come to any conclusion as to how he should see her. He therefore sauntered on up the road past the house, reflecting somewhat as follows:—

"How wud it do to say I hard the owl boy wasn't well? Naw—they might ask me who towl me; it wudn't do. 'Tarnal, how wud it do if I wud say I wanted the loan of somethin'? Naw—he wud know well enough I niver come a mile an' a half for that. I tell you what I'll do, but—I'll say I was just passin' from Billy M'Kee's, the pig-killer, and that I jist thought I wud call

an' see how he was. But naw—oh, bad luck to the bit of him wud believe me! Ah! I hiv it! I'll tell him I come over to ask his opinion about that King's Moss Farm he used to be luckin' after, just for a frien' that's thinkin' o' speculatin'. That'll butther him up, I'll warrant ye. That'll put him aff the scent, an' no mistake. Man, that's jist the thing. Why didn't ye think o' that before, Dick, ye divil, ye?"

And Dick turned to go back towards the house. But when he was quite opposite the house, instead of turning in, he only halted a moment, and then walked on; and stopping when he was past, looked up at the house, scratched his head, and uttered the valiant remark—

"Holy Moses, I don't like!"

Would you believe it? Dick prowled about there till half-past nine—about the time they generally go to bed in the country—and could not persuade himself to go in. Every time he went to do it, he felt so "all quarish," as he himself classically denominated it, that he immediately found himself turning and making for the road again.

There was but one hope left him. If Nannie slept alone in the room in which he had seen her pull down the blind, he could attract her attention by throwing up gravel; or perhaps he could climb up on the fowlshed, and, having thus ascertained whether there was any one in the room but herself, could, if his observations were favourable, tap gently upon her, and so bring her to the window easily.

With these romantic intentions, he stole round to the gable of the house, and, sitting down on he wasn't exactly sure what, waited for the appearance of a light at the window. He had not sat more than ten minutes when, sure enough, a faint, shadowy light began to flicker in the room, which grew brighter and brighter till it was set down close to the window.

Nay, more, it was—no, it wasn't—yes, it was—no—yes—no—yes, yes, yes! it was Nannie, really Nannie—beautiful Nannie—lovely Nannie—angel Nannie that bore the light! Dick sprang up, and flourished his arms round him like a windmill, in wild endeavours to attract her attention—quite forgetful, be it noticed, that a person in a lighted room cannot see into the outside darkness.

However, seeing her cold indifference to

his frantic gesticulations, the truth forced itself upon him; and he thereupon set about climbing the fowl-shed in a perfect splutter of haste. He slipped, and scrambled, and scratched, and scraped, in an exceedingly unromantic manner, at a corner of the shed, for almost five minutes before he could manage to get on the roof; and when at length he did, after the greatest difficulty, manage it, the blind was there and then pulled down, and all his toil seemed to have been in vain. Nothing daunted, however, he pulled his sleeve across his perspiring brow, and crept up to the window. There was a small opening at one side of the blind, through which he was able to see about half of the apartment. He could see that Nannie was standing opposite the glass, taking down her hair, and there did not appear to be any one else in the room. He thought he would venture on a tap; and, with a heart that beat almost aloud, he did so.

Nannie stopped brushing her hair, and looked round, but immediately resumed her occupation. Again Dick raised his hand, and this time gave three or four distinct taps. Nannie instantly put her hand down, raised a corner of the blind, and peered out. Seeing the figure of a man close up to her window, she uttered a suppressed scream, and dropped the blind; but almost simultaneously recognising Dick's features, she fastened her door, raised the blind again, and silently drew up the window about a foot.

"In the name of goodness, Dick, is that you? How or when on the earth did you get there at all?"

Dick felt very much confused, and nervously affected to make it out a joke.

"Ha! ha! I jist thought I wud give ye a bit of a scare. I havn't put ye about, hiv I?"

"Oh, no; but—but—how did you get there?"

"Well, ye see—a—I just took a notion that—a—that I wud take a run over and see how ye—how ye got on wi' the owl boy after I left you last night."

"Why, you silly fellow ye, an' is that what brought you so far? Sure, you might have known we would be all right."

"No; I thought, ye know, he might ha' been up, and that ye maybe had a row wi' him. But I havn't disturbed ye, hiv I?"

"Oh no, not at all. Only it seems so

funny for you to be sittin' out there on the roof o' the hen-house. Why didn't you come earlier, and come in?"

"Well, I thought that maybe owl Nebuchadnezzar might think—a—mightn't like it."

"Oh, he wouldn't have said a word," said Nannie, laughing, "and you—"

"Wheesh!" ejaculated Dick, suddenly interrupting her. "By the breeks o' Mol-rooney, here's somebody comin' wi' a lanthorn. Wheesh! By my soul, it's the owl fella, as shure as the haft's in the beetle. An—howl on—by the hole in my coat, he's comin' to look at the fowl!"

The candle was out in a trice, and Dick laid himself flat along the roof, and anxiously watched the manœuvres of the old gentleman.

Dick was quite right regarding the purpose of his elderly friend in coming out with the lantern.

He came straight up to the fowl-shed, singing a pathetic melody, the words of which were—

"Te row-dil-day, row-dil-day, row-dil-day dan,
Te ow-dil-day, row-dil-day, dow-dil-ay an,
Te tow-dil-tay, tiddle-tay, tiddle-tum-tan,
Tay um-th-tum, tootle-um, fal-de-rol-ee."

It was touching; but Dick was scarcely in a position to enjoy it. He felt the force of gravitation strongly disposing him to go sliding down the roof, and over the eaves, and on to the ground, with a celerity and noise that would hardly have suited either the soundness of his bones or the secrecy of his presence. Now and then, as this disposition became more powerful, he made a slight shuffling and scratching noise which was decidedly portentous; but the old man was either not acute enough to hear it, or laid it to the account of the fowls; for, after seeing that all was right, he reclosed the door, and began the pathetic melody with renewed gusto. But just when he was returning round the shed to go back into the house, poor Dick was momentarily overcome by the aforementioned force of gravitation, and slid—with a jerky, scraping noise—about a foot down the roof.

The old man ceased the pathetic strains instantly, began to look about him, and finally returned to the fowl-shed door, and commenced a search in the interior of the building.

Now was the critical moment with Dick. In his new position, he was literally hanging

by a thread, and did not know the minute he would go sliding down. He clawed at the roof with the spasmodic energy of despair; but he felt that his tenure was precarious in the extreme, and that, if the old fellow did not go into the house very, very soon, down he must come, though the world were on fire. At this instant he heard a great fluttering and flapping inside the shed, mingled with the voice of the old man in angry altercation with the big Cochin China cock. Evidently he was paying the cock for Dick's unfortunate slide.

In a few moments all subsided into quietness again, and the patriarch emerged from the shed and closed the door, not singing the touching melody, but grumbling to himself like a veteran pauper at meal-time. As he once more passed under the shed, Dick thought he felt himself going. The old man's choler, however, which had been stirred up by the restlessness of the Cochin China, considerably accelerated his step, and in a few seconds he was round the corner, without the impending accident having occurred.

As Dick scrambled to his knees, breathing a sigh of relief, a new fear suddenly seized him. With the movement, he distinctly felt the roof springing under him; and, making another movement to try it, found one of the boards cracking down the middle, and the rest bending as though they had no support below.

"Is he away?" said Nannie here, in a half-whisper from the inside.

"He is, an' bad luck till him," returned Dick, brightening up, and again creeping cautiously towards the window, which Nannie then opened as before.

"Are you sure?" continued she, setting the little dressing table aside, pushing up the window a little higher, and putting out her head and shoulders to look about. To do what, did I say? To look about? Well, I don't know—perhaps it *was* to look about; and then, again, perhaps it *wasn't*. At any rate, her face was placed so close to Dick's as to be almost contiguous; and this was more than Dick could bear. Quickly stealing his arm round her neck, he exclaimed, with great warmth—

"Augh, Nannie, dear, give us a kiss on the head of it; for, upon my sowl, yer goin' to be the breakin' o' my heart, any way."

Nannie pretended to fight hard against his caresses, but Dick only kissed the more;

and it ended in Nannie sitting down on the bottom of the window—which was only about a foot from the floor—and Dick sitting on the sill with his arm round her waist.

"Well, Nannie," said Dick, looking in her face, and speaking with much enthusiasm, "ye hiv the purtiest mouth iver I saw on a woman. Upon my sowl, Nannie, I cud kiss ye from mornin' till night. I cud, in sowl."

"Get away with your nonsense, Dick, and don't be talkin' that way. You want to make fun of me."

"Make fun o' ye! I wudn't make fun o' ye for all the world, Nannie. Indeed, I mane it—an' to my own cost, too. I didn't sleep a wink last night fur—fur thinkin' o' ye, Nannie; and when I did sleep, I was dhramin' about you."

"Ha, ha! You don't suppose I'm goin' to believe that, Dick, do ye?"

"Well, indeed, Nannie, it's thrue. Divil the bit o' me has been worth tuppence iver since I seen ye at the ball."

Dick drew Nannie closer to him as he spoke the last words, and laid his cheek against hers. She sighed slightly, and said, in a low voice—

"Ah, Dick, it's hard to know you men! Maybe your just thryin' to make a fool o' me. It's just like what ye would do, an' it's very—"

But here Dick shuffled down on the roof, took Nannie by both hands, looked straight into her face, and began—

"Nannie, my darlin' Nannie—as sure as God's above me, I—"

Oh, how mysterious and sudden are the tortuosities of fate!

The glowing confession, replete with the poetry of love, that Dick was about to utter ended, with singular abruptness, in the most intense practicality. ●

Something gave a slight crack, and, almost simultaneous with the sound, Dick disappeared from the window, and went right through the roof, with a crack that must have been heard fully a quarter of a mile round.

Then, maybe there wasn't a commotion! Helter-skelter went the ducks and hens in all directions, shouting murder at the top of their voices, in their own peculiar way.

"Quack, quack, quack, quack," screamed thirteen flying ducks at once.

"Chuck-a, chuck-a—ke, ki, kay, ka, kack, kack-a," yelled eighteen hens and the

cock, flapping wildly away like a covey of partridges.

"Gobble, gobble, gobble, gobble," declared half a dozen turkeys, as they tore away over everything; while, by way of completing the chorus, the nine geese went, half flying, half running from the scene, making about as much noise as all the other voices combined. Dick's first important discovery was that he was lying on the broad of his back among a lot of broken boards. Then the whole of the circumstances flashed through his mind at once.

He scrambled to his feet, in great desperation, cleared every obstacle at a bound, and proceeded down the road with about as much haste as we might expect of a man who had just had the high privilege of seeing the "owl boy," or some such interesting phenomenon, coming round the corner at a rapid run.

"BETSY LEE."

IT is not without a feeling of humiliation, and a deep sense of our own intellectual shortcomings, that we own ourselves to be, in respect of poetic taste, disgracefully behind our age. With conscious shame, we confess to an old-fashioned partiality for intelligible poetry, and a lamentable inability to appreciate and enjoy the beauties of the modern school of obscure intensity. We find ourselves hopelessly at sea amidst the sensuous mysticism of Mr. Swinburne, and the laborious subtlety of Mr. Browning. Our heads are puzzled, but our hearts are not touched, by their psychological conundrums. There is something blurred, and hazy, and indistinct about even their intensest passion: we miss the clear shining, the penetrating light of the old stars of song. It is dreadful heresy to make these admissions; but it is just possible that there may be others in like condition with ourselves, and to them the announcement that a piece of genuine, intelligible poetry has just appeared will be as refreshing as it was to ourselves. At the same time, let it be understood that the very remarkable poem on which we purpose offering here a few rambling reflections needs no apology whatever for receiving a more than passing notice at our hands. We do not know when we have met with so much picturesque and graphic description, so much real dramatic power, and such vivid painting of strong

emotions, as in the poem to which its anonymous author has given the homely title of "Betsy Lee: a Fo'c's'le Yarn."

In the first place, there is the charm of freshness about it. It deals with a place, a people, and a dialect which have as yet fallen within the province of no other writer. The author breaks virgin soil; and that alone should give him a strong claim upon our consideration and gratitude, in an age in which an unhackneyed subject is a precious rarity.

The scene of the poem is laid in Manxland (place of our own "kindly engendure"), and the poem itself is a gallery of pictures—racy, lively, and original—of Manx life and manners.

Thirty years have brought great changes into the Isle of Man; among them an annual invasion of something like 100,000 holiday-makers, which has played sad havoc with the old Arcadian simplicity of the place, though, thank Heaven! not even the civilization of English tourists can quite vulgarize its noble mountains, its clear green sea, and the shy beauty of its sheltered glens.

Up to a recent date the little island slumbered on peacefully and happily in its old traditions; with its own laws, its own judges, its own self-elective Parliament, the House of Keys, its simple, homely, kindly clergy, and its quaint, time-honoured old fashions.

"A sleepy land where, under the same wheel,
The same old rut would deepen year by year."

But the fairy prince who was to break this enchanted sleep came in the disagreeable and duplicate form of a Ritualistic bishop and a Radical governor. Between them they effectually stirred the place up. No more self-elective Parliaments, no more homely parsons, but popular elections and a strait-laced priesthood. Well, Manxmen are moving with the times; but we may be pardoned, perhaps, for letting just one sigh of regret escape us for the simple old style that is gone; and we may be allowed to doubt whether the change from a humdrum routine to an activity which takes the form of perpetual bickering, quarrelling, and bitterness, is a very pleasant or a very desirable one.

The native Manx, however, are still a simple, kindly race, superstitious and imaginative, like all pure Celts, and with depths of passion and emotion underlying a calm exterior. A comely race, too—the women robust and shapely, the men tall and stalwart: with a language of its own, now rapidly grow-

ing obsolete, in place of which has arisen a distinct dialect of English, a brogue as rich and racy and expressive as Lowland Scotch or Tipperary Irish. A race with a distinct nomenclature, too. The Quirks, the Quilliams, the Qualtroughs, the Quayles, the Quines, the Kermodes, the Kerruishes, the Karrans, the Corkhills, the Creers, the Clagues, the Corrins, and the Callows, are names unique; none but a Manxman ever bore them. And it would, by the bye, have given this poem a richer local colouring if the author had introduced more of these unmistakable and genuine old Manx names.

Among such a people, a poet's fancy and observation must surely find no lack of fertile themes. But, till now, Manxland has produced no poet. Nor has the Manx language any literature, written or unwritten, except the old "carvals" or carols chanted in quaint fashion in the parish churches on Oiel Verry (Christmas Eve), and a few stray ballads like "Mollie Charane" and "William Dhone," of which, by the way, spirited translations from the pen of George Borrow appeared in the early numbers of this magazine.

The author of "Betsy Lee," to whom, meanwhile, we owe a humble apology for this long digression, has therefore all the advantages and disadvantages of being his own pioneer in an untrodden field. The very dialect in which he writes has never been seen in print before; and he has therefore had to invent a phonetic system of spelling, itself no light task, but one which he has accomplished with such success, that, with few exceptions, the spelling of the word conveys its ordinary pronunciation at a glance.

The poem is in narrative form. A Manx sailor, himself the hero of the story, is the narrator, and his shipmates, gathered round him in the "fo'c's'le," between watches, the audience. As a specimen of the style and diction, we cannot do better than quote the opening lines:—

"I said I would? Well, I hardly know;
But a yarn's a yarn, so here we go.
It's along of me and a Lawyer's Clerk—
You've seen, mayhap, that sort of spark?
As neat, and as pert, and as sharp as a pin,
With a mossel of hair on the tip of his chin;
With his face so fine and his tongue so glib,
And a saucy cock in the set of his jib;
With his rings and his studs, and all the rest,
And half a chain cable paid out on his breast.
Now there's different divils ashore and at sea,
And a divil's a divil wherever he be;

But if you want the rael ould mark,
The divil of divils is the Lawyer's Clerk.
Well—out it must come, though it be with a wrench,
And I must tell you about a wench
That I was a courtin' of. Yes, me!
Aye, and her name it was Betsy Lee.
Betsy Lee—*You thought there was love*
*In the case—*did you, Bob? So help me, I'll shove
This boot down your throat if you don't stop laughin';
It's a regular stopper, that snigglin' and chaffin'.
When a man has a yarn to spin, d'ye see,
He must spin it away, and spin it free;
Or else—well, perhaps—*there isn' no call—*
But just don't do it again, that's all!"

The little passages between the narrator and some of his unruly hearers are introduced with great skill and effect, and impart a wonderful vivacity and naturalness to the narrative; and one of the most remarkable features of the poem is the marvellous manner in which the narrator's individuality is preserved throughout. He is never once merged in the author. It is Tom Baynes, the sailor, who is speaking, from beginning to end; and in no single instance does he use a phrase or an expression which is not in perfect keeping with his character and surroundings. There is not a simile nor a metaphor which is not drawn from objects familiar to the sailors he is addressing. We can only describe the effect by asking the reader to imagine some process analogous to instantaneous photography, by which the voices and the language of that group in the fore-castle should be as faithfully and accurately reproduced as their figures would be in a sun-picture. Such a process, or something akin to it, the author of "Betsy Lee" seems to have discovered; for this poem is really a photograph of a genuine sailor's yarn—every minutest detail in voice, detail, and expression is conveyed to the reader. We can only compare it to Tennyson's "Northern Farmer;" though that, after all, conveys but a poor idea of the sustained power of this poem, of the intensity of the emotion it portrays, and the quaint and racy humour which enlivens it. The story in itself is a sad one, but with much beauty and tenderness in its pathos. Love, and sorrow, and suffering, and treachery, and revenge, are all elements in the drama which it so powerfully depicts. We shall not destroy the force of its interest and fascination for those who have not yet read it, by divulging more of the story than is sufficient to ren-

der intelligible the passages we shall comment upon.

Tom Baynes and his future sweetheart grow up as children together, sharing in the same baby-play—and very prettily and naturally that baby-play is described—with no thought of anything deeper, till an accident suddenly reveals the woman in Betsy. The passage is so full of life and power that we cannot resist quoting it at length:—

"Well, I never took notions on Betsy Lee,
Nor no more did she, I suppose, on me,
Till one day diggin' upon the sand—
Gibbins, of course, you'll understand—
A lad as was always a cheeky young sprout
Began a-pullin' of Betsy about;
And he worried the wench till her shoulders were
bare,
And he slipped the knot of her beautiful hair,
And down it came, as you may say,
Just like a shower of golden spray,
Blown this way and that by a gamesome breeze,
And a rip—rip—rippin' down to her knees.
I looked at Betsy—my gough! how she stood!
A quiv'rin' all over—and her face like blood;
And her eyes, all wet with tears, like fire,
And her breast a-swellin' higher and higher;
And she gripped her sickle with a twitchy feel,
And her thumb started out like a coil of steel,
And a cloud seemed to pass from my eyes, and a
glory,
Like that you'll see painted sometimes in a story,
Breathed out from her skin, and I saw her no more
The child I had always thought her before,
But wrapped in the glory, and wrapped in the hair,
Every inch of a woman stood pantin' there.
So I ups with my fist, as I was boun',
And I damns his eyes and I knocks him down;
But from that day, by land and sea,
I loved her, oh, I loved her! my Betsy Lee!"

As it is just possible that some of our readers have never indulged in the pastime of "diggin' gibbins in the sand," we may state that "gibbins"—are sand-worms used for bait, and not a proper name, as might appear at first sight. Probably none but a Manxman in exile will understand how that single familiar guttural, "my gough!" of which it would be hopeless to attempt to convey any idea of the pronunciation but by word of mouth, came as music to our ears, bringing back, with a rush, all our old memories of the half-forgotten brogue. From that moment till we finished the poem we were Manx once more, body and soul: the Sassenach bonds which have so long bound us were burst, and we were back again in "th' Oilan;" we felt our foot upon our native ling; we—but, there, that will do—rhapsodies in prose have gone out of fashion since Christopher North's time, and are voted a little ridiculous nowadays. Suffice it to say that we have ever

since been prone to launch out into a tongue "not understood of" our English friends, who entertain strong doubts of our sanity.

But to return to Tom Baynes and his sweetheart. Let us take a glimpse at them during their brief and happy courtship. Here is an evening picture, perfect in its way, and worthy of Burns:—

"Aw, them courtin' times! Well, it's no use tryin'
To tell what they were, and time is flyin'.
But you know how it is—the father pretendin'
He never sees nothin', and the mother mendin',
Or a grippin' the Bible and spellin' a tex, a
And a eyin' us now and then over her specs.
And Betsy and me sittin' back in the chimley,
And her a clickin' her needles so nimbly,
And me lookin' straight in ould Anthony's face,
And a stealin' my arm round Betsy's wais'.
Aw, the shy she was! But when Anthony said,
'Now, childher, it's time to be goin' to bed,'
Then Betsy would say, as we all of us riz,
'I wonder what sort of a night it is?'
Or—'Never mind, father, I'll shut the door,'
And shut it she did, you may be sure;
Only the way she done it, d'ye see?
I was outside, and so was she!"

At this point the sly looks and nudges of some of his hearers lead to an indignant vindication of Betsy's innocence, followed by this outburst on the beauties of an innocent foot, which is full of freshness and originality:—

"For it's no use the whole world talkin' to me,
If I'd never seen nothin' of Betsy Lee
Except her foot, I was bound to know
That she was as pure as the driven snow.
For there's feet that houlds on like a cat on a roof,
And there's feet that thumps like an elephant's
hoof;
There's feet that goes trundlin' on like a barra,
And some that's crooky, some as straight as an
arra;
There's feet that's thick and feet that's thin,
And some turnin' out and some turnin' in;
And there's feet that can run and feet that can
walk,
Aye, feet that can laugh and feet that can talk—
But an innocent foot—it's got the spring
That you feel when you tread on the mountain
ling;
And it's tied to the heart and not to the hip,
And it moves with the eye and it moves with the
lip.
I suppose it's God that makes when He wills
Them beautiful things—with the lift of His hills,
And the waft of His winds, and His calms, and His
storms,
And His work and His rest; and that's how He
forms
A simple wench to be true and free,
And to move like a piece of poethry."

Here and elsewhere—especially in the sailor's quaint and original reflections on cows—the author has been very happy in

rendering a peculiar feature in the Manx character—the fondness for philosophizing on the natural objects around them. We have noticed it in the very children, and have been often struck by the shrewdness and depth of some of their comments. Equally happy, too, has he been in portraying the simple wonder with which they regard everything in nature, with eyes quick and keen to discern the poetry which lies hidden in the commonest features of earth and sky. To such minds, none of God's works can be commonplace.

There are many choice and delicious bits we should like to quote from Tom Baynes's description of his courtship, but we are reminded that our space is limited; and with earnest injunctions to the reader to linger over the milking scenes, and the promise of a good laugh over Tom's revenge upon the "Lawyer chap," who interrupts the lovers' tête-à-tête, we pass on. Of the cloud that comes over the lives of these two, and darkens their happiness; of Tom's subsequent agony and despair, told with singular pathos and power, we have not space to write; nor, if we had, would we spoil the story for those who have not read it, by giving the clue to the catastrophe. There are two characters in the latter part of the poem to which we wish to call attention, each of them a clever and faithful portrait. The first is that of Pazon Gale:—

"Now the grandest ould Pazon, I'll be bail,
That ever was, was ould Pazon Gale.
Aw, of all the kind, and the good, and the true,
And the aisy and free, and—'How do you do?
And how's your mother, Tom, and—the fishin'?'
Spakin' that nice, and allis wishin'
Good-luck to the boats, and—'How's the take?'
And blessin' us there for Jesus' sake.
And many a time he'd come out and try
A line, and the keen he was and the spry!
And he'd sit in the stern, and he'd tuck his tails,
And well he knew how to handle the sails.
And sometimes, if we were smookin', he'd ax
For a pipe, and then we'd be turnin' our backs,
Lettin' on never to see him, and lookin'
This way and that way, and him a smookin'
Twis' as strong and as black as tar,
And terrible sollum and regular.
Bless me! The sperrit that was in him, too,
Houldin' on till all was blue!
And only a little man, but staunch,
With a main big heart aback of his paunch!
Just a little round man—but you should ha seen
him agate
Of a good-sized conger or a skate:
His arms as stiff, and his eyes afire,
And every muscle of him like wire.

He was a simple Pazon, and loving and wise;

That's what he was, and quiet uncommon,
And never said much to man nor woman;
Only the little he said was meat
For a hungry heart, and soft and sweet,
The way he said it."

It would be hard to improve upon that picture of a pattern Manx parson of the old type—godly, and kindly, and homely; a race rapidly dying out, though there are still one or two noble specimens left. There was not always, however, this happy combination of physical and moral qualities. We remember one parson who might physically have sat for the portrait of Pazon Gale, of whom we have heard it said with pride, by one of his parishioners, that he could "tackle any man in the parish; mortal handy with his fists, and not a batter judge of a horse in th' oilan'." Even his friends and admirers, however, admitted that he had one failing, at once the commonest and the most leniently regarded of all failings among Manxmen, high and low—

"A nice ould man, but *hard on the drink*."

The second character to which we would call attention is Tom's mother—as vigorously and faithfully drawn as old Lizabeth in "Adam Bede"—

"Hard she was, and lusty and strong;
And as for shearin' and pickin' potatoes—
Aw, well, she bet all, and always as nate as
A pin, and takin' a pride in it.

But hard, aw hard! for the ould man died,
And she looked and she looked, but she never
cried—
And him laid out as sweet as bran,
And everything white—like a gentleman.
And brass nails, bless ye! and none of your
'sterrits,
But proud in herself, and sarvin' the sperrits;
And—"Misthress Bayntes, now! was he pre-
pared?"
"God knows!" says she—aw, the woman was hard.
But if you could have prised the hatches
Of that strong sowl, you would have seen the
catches
She made at her heart, choked up to the brim,
And you'd ha' knew she was dead as him.
But, mind me! from that very day,
The woman's-juice, as you may say,
Was clean dried out of her, and she got
As tough and as dry, and as hard as a knot:
Hard—but handy and goin' still,
Not troublin' much for good or ill;
*Like the moon and the stars God only touched
Once long ago, and away they scutched;
And now, he never minds them a bit,
But they keep goin' on, for they're used of it.*"

The scenes between the old woman and her son are as powerfully drawn as any in

the poem. Her love for him is strong through all—

“Aw, the woman was hard, but the woman was true.”

And here we must close our quotations, and leave the reader to pick out for himself the many beauties which we have had unwillingly to pass over. The many happy images and similes with which the poem abounds, always apt and striking, often beautiful—as, for example, this one, a gem to our thinking—

“A star came out, like a swan on a lake,
White and lonely—”

the picture of Tommy Tite, the “lean, ould, hungry, mangy sinner;” of “ould Anthony” in his shirt—

“Like Sammil when he was riz from the dead”—

the scene with Jenny Magee; the episode of “little Simmy,” whose introduction is a stroke of true poetry; Tom’s unexpected return; his reception as a ghost by his mother; the inimitable quaintness and naïveté of his “notions” on the Bible as a sedative for “ould people;” and the closing scene, full of tender and mournful pathos—all these we reluctantly dismiss with this scant mention. Not the least charm and beauty of this fine poem is the character of Tom Baynes himself—the brave, manly heart, big with love, and pity, and tenderness; the chivalrous soul, so sorely tried, yet generous, devoted, and true to the last.

“Betsy Lee” is plainly the outcome of a long and loving study of the habits and feelings, the manners and speech of the Manx peasantry and fishermen; and we hope to see it welcomed with the same appreciation and delight with which Mr. Barnes’s exquisite poems have been received by the Dorset labourers. Each writer deserves our thanks for proving what power and beauty of expression our English provincial dialects are capable of in the hands of a master.

To all exiled Manxmen, we doubt not, “Betsy Lee” will come, as it comes to us, redolent of the salt-water and mountain ling. The reading of it is as refreshing as wading among the cool, tangle-bottomed dubs on a hot summer’s day; it is like inhaling deep draughts of the sea-breeze that blows from over the Stack or “Langlish,” invigorating as a climb up the steep sides of Barroole or Cronk Ireyna-Lhaa.

We have only had to close our eyes,

and we were back again on the beach at Derbyhaven, watching the lusty fishermen hauling up the herring boats for the winter, while they trolled the chant set by that tremendous fogleman of theirs, that “Son of Thunder,” whose voice might have been heard as far as Port-le-Murray. We owe the author a deep debt of gratitude for reviving these memories, and awakening these feelings; and we venture to think that the thought of having earned that gratitude will not be the least pleasant or satisfactory part of his reward.

A RELIC OF HERNE'S OAK.

MR. W. PERRY, wood sculptor to the Queen, of 5, North Audley-street, has executed a beautiful bust of Shakspeare, two feet high and full three-quarters life size, out of a piece of the tree which, a few years since, was an object of great interest in Windsor Park, rendered famous by the pen of the immortal bard in “The Merry Wives of Windsor,” and known as Herne’s Oak.

In this bust the artist’s intention, we are told, was so to blend those portraits generally considered more or less authentic as to produce a pleasing and intellectual likeness of the poet, which every one may recognize, without its being a copy of any particular one. A difficult task, we should imagine; but the artist has been successful in accomplishing his design. The wood is a fine specimen of the oak; and the principal part of the bust is made from the residue of the block out of which a bust of Shakspeare was made, by command, for the Queen, in 1864; whose ancestry has for generations held the tree in the highest esteem, associating it with Shakspeare, and preserving it with the greatest care.

As many of our readers are aware, the identity of this tree has been doubted by some. Numerous have been the discussions, and various the authors who have written on the subject; but it seems to have been reserved for Mr. Perry—after having written a treatise in its defence—to have made a discovery which, united to all the other evidence in its favour, places its identity almost, if not quite, beyond doubt or question.

The details of this discovery having already been made public, we will not here

repeat them; but the substance will perhaps not be unacceptable to our readers, which is as follows. Upon examination of the wood, the annular rings show positive proof that this tree, more than two centuries ago, ceased to vegetate for about thirty years; which, in all probability, the superstition of the age imputed to the evil spirit of "Herne the Hunter," but the cause of which he attributes to the power of lightning—especially as it was a very tall, maiden tree, rearing its stately head, when in its prime, above the surrounding ones. After this, it grew vigorously for about the same period, when commenced a slow and gradual decline till it died.

Commencing from this stoppage in its growth, adding the number of the annular rings to the years it stood lifeless before it fell from natural decay, and, by allowance for the waste the wood sustained during the latter period, this cessation of growth has been traced back to within a few years of the time in which Shakspeare lived. From the fact thus proved by the wood, he infers that those who viewed the tree at any time after its resuscitation, being ignorant of its previous state of apparent death, were led to doubt its identity, by reason of its flourishing appearance, long after that period; and thus were led to think it must have been some other tree which Shakspeare intended. The old pollard then standing on the edge of the pit—but "cut down in 1796, by order of George III., that it might not be confounded with the real Herne's Oak"—being the nearest and most likely in appearance, some attached their belief to that tree, and so arose the difference of opinion as to which was the veritable tree.

This is a very ingenious way of explaining the matter, and we are bound to acknowledge it a reasonable one; and doubt not our Shakspearean friends will be pleased with the solution which Mr. Perry has enabled us to lay before them, especially those who possess any relics of the wood. Mr. Perry, we believe, is the only person now having any but very small pieces of the famous tree unappropriated—except that which the Queen has in reserve for her Majesty's own purposes—and his remaining stock of wood will not admit of his making more than one bust of the same size as the present one, though for other objects it may be available.

The bust in question was intended for

the International Exhibition of this year; and it is to be regretted that it was not completed in time for admission, as it is worthy of a place where the public may have an opportunity of viewing it, it being perhaps the most interesting relic of the tree in existence, and, at the same time, one of the most pleasing effigies of Shakspeare we have seen.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—XI.

THE next day was a long, weary one. Nothing makes time hang heavy on hand like perfect idleness, more particularly after days of more than usual activity. After collecting the cattle—the work of about an hour—we loitered about, watching the ceaseless rushing river in a lazy, dreamy sort of manner, tired to death of our day's rest, and glad enough when evening again began to appear. We had a first-rate supply of wood, and could afford to keep up a bright, warm, cheerful fire; so with a clear, starry sky above us, giving promise of a pleasant, dry night, we settled down to a comfortable, chatty, gossiping evening. Stevens had not returned, so it was proposed that I should take his place in the storytelling line, and as it would have been my turn next evening, I consented.

"As I am to represent Charlie," I said, "I will perform a sort of half-promise he made a few evenings ago, by telling you the history of an old hut-keeper, who used to 'do' for Charlie and I when we were little fellows, shepherding together in Victoria. So put more wood on the fire, replenish my pan-kin with some hot grog, let me refill my pipe, and I am ready to go ahead."

OLD GEORGE'S (THE MAD HUT-KEEPER'S) STORY.

When Charlie Stevens and I were little fellows of about thirteen years old, we were great chums, and were much together. I was living on the same station for a year then, in order to get the benefit of Charlie's tutor; but I am sorry to say we used to take very unfair advantage of our preceptor being a little chap, and learnt little or nothing from him. You see, one day when he attempted to exert his authority over us, and was proceeding to give Charlie a thrashing, we rebelled, and completely turned the tables. After that we did just

what we pleased with him, and although we used to go to the school-room every morning for a few hours, we never did any work. Poor little man, what a life he must have had with us! There are no tyrants so merciless as boys.

At the time of which I speak, nearly all the hands had made off to the diggings—it was in '52—and many stations were left without shepherds, stockmen, or anything else in the shape of men. Even shearers were not to be got, although as much as two and even three pounds per hundred sheep was offered. Every one was delirious with gold fever.

At that time diggers sometimes earned small fortunes in a few weeks. But their good luck seldom did them good. No sooner had they a few hundred pounds in their pockets, than away they went to Melbourne, or even to some miserable, dirty "accommodation house" on the way, and spent it, either in drinking, or in some other equally foolish, but perhaps not so injurious, a manner. I knew of a party of eight who went to a drinking shop on the Bendigo Diggings, and getting large tubs, filled them with champagne, and then shoved their great feet—which had very likely never been in foot-baths before—into the sparkling wine, and coolly proceeded to wash them. What pleasure they derived from it I cannot imagine. I suppose they thought it an awfully swell thing to do; but, after all, it was more sensible than drinking the poisonous compound sold at the diggings under the name of champagne. So they spent every penny they earned in similar folly, seemingly eager to prove the truth of the old proverb about "Making money like horses, and spending it like asses."

Men being so scarce, we—that is, Charlie and I—had a flock of sheep put under our charge for some months, as I told you a few nights ago. We were sent to an out-station, about seven or eight miles from the home station, and about five or six from McIvor—there were no diggings there then, however—and the only hut-keeper on the station was sent with us to cook, and change the hurdles used for folding the sheep. This old hut-keeper—Old George, and sometimes Mad George, as he was called—was a curious-looking customer. Although not, as his name implied, old, he looked so, from having long white hair, and an enormously long, bushy white beard. His face

was very much browned and tanned by exposure to the sun. He always wore a pair of moleskin trousers, and a red flannel shirt, open all down the front, and showing his sunburnt chest. This was all his dress, and he seldom supplemented it even with a cap or boots. He was a very good cook, great at mutton stews, and famous for dampers; but beyond this he appeared to have no other special talent; and he was a silent and reserved companion, seldom speaking unless when spoken to, and often not even then, as he was very deaf.

He always slept in his watch-box—that is to say, Bill, a sort of large dog-kennel on four legs, which is carried about when the sheepfold is changed—so as to be near the sheep, to keep away wild dogs, then rather too plentiful in that part of the country; and so Charlie and I had the hut to ourselves. We used to make our beds on the clay floor in front of the fire, and lie reading aloud in turns, by the light of a slush lamp.

"What on earth is a slush lamp?" interrupted Bill.

"Oh," I replied, "a slush lamp is a sort of substitute for candles, and is made thus—take an old tin pannikin, put about an inch of sand or earth in the bottom, then wrap a piece of cotton loosely round a stick, which push into the sand, pour in mutton or beef fat, light the cotton, and you have an ingenious contrivance, which gives a feeble, sickly light, with an enormous proportion of smoke, and a fine, rich aroma of burnt grease."

"How nice!" muttered Bill.

"Well, it is not the nicest light in the world, perhaps not quite suited to a London ball-room, you know; but it is better than none at all. And many a capital book I have read by the light of a smoky, spluttering, smelling slush lamp, with the night wind blowing through the chinks of the slab hut, causing it to flicker sadly, and occasionally extinguishing it altogether."

One night, after we had as usual taken up our evening quarters in front of a huge blazing fire, and were comfortably reading "Uncle Tom's Cabin"—I remember nearly every word of that book to this day—we were disturbed by hearing a dingo or native dog howling in the bush not far from us. Fearing George might not hear it, we got up, and dressing ourselves quickly, ran down to

his watch-box to rouse him out. There he lay, sure enough, sound asleep, and we had to shake him to awaken him. Then we assisted him to collect wood and make fires round the sheep, to frighten away the dingoes. As it would not have been safe to have left the sheep alone when the native dogs were so close, we took up our quarters near one of the fires we had lighted, and began, boy-like, to question Old George about his former life.

"Ah! young masters," he said, in reply to a question of how it was that he was hut-keeping—"ah! it's not what I've been used to; but my life has been a sad one. It has been like a stormy, dark night. Once a bright star shone on it for a short, happy period; but when the heavy, angry clouds obscured it again, I was left in darkness blacker than before. Never more will my life be clear, until, when my night of life is ended, the light of another world dawns upon me. Would that that hour was come! I will tell you my unhappy story. I know you, young masters, will listen with pity to it."

I am the eldest son of a gentleman who had a good property in one of the northern counties of England. I had one brother, a year younger than myself—a wild, dissipated gambler. Often I have paid his debts out of my own allowance, rather than let my father know of his misdeeds. Each time I did so, William—my brother was so called—promised never to touch a card or back a horse again; and each time, after a few weeks' quiet life, he returned to his evil courses with redoubled energy, and soon got as much in debt as ever. When I was about twenty-eight years old, my father died, leaving me the heir to all his property, which was entailed. Hitherto I had lived a quiet country life; but now, forced by business to frequent the busy haunts of men, I began to like the excitements of the world and the gay pleasures of society. Rich, good-looking, and easy-tempered, I was soon a favourite with those whom I came in contact with. Simple in the ways of the world, and unsuspecting by nature, I was silly enough to suppose that it was the man and not the money they courted; and it flattered my pride and conceit to be so much thought of and sought after. To crown my happiness, I grew fondly attached to a beautiful girl, who

seemed to return my love; and, before I had known her many months, we were engaged. I need not tell you her name, nor need I give you a description of her, more than in saying that she was tall, dark, with long, raven locks and black, flashing eyes; of rather a Spanish type of beauty—commanding and imperious-looking. I was intoxicated with her beauty, and worshipped her madly. The veriest trifle she touched became holy and sacred to me; her slightest wish was law. I obeyed every look or gesture; and, blinded by my foolish, insane love, I became her abject slave, only living for the pleasure of serving her and being near her.

Oh! fool, idiot that I was, to suppose that such as she could love a poor, weak, silly creature like me! But soon I was to be undeceived. My brother came to stay with me at the same time that *she* and her mother were visiting me. He, too, seemed struck with her beauty; and told me, in a joking, laughing sort of way, what a lucky fellow I was.

"You elder brothers," he said—half bitterly, I thought—"are always in luck, in love or war. With a nice snug income, and dear old country place, you are going to marry the handsomest woman in England, with whom you are deeply in love, and no wonder; and who, as a matter of course," he added, with a half-sneering smile, "is equally devoted to you or your acres. Oh, happy accident of birth! Now look at the unhappy younger son, as illustrated by myself. Unlucky at my birth, the same evil genius pursues me through life. Born with the same, or rather ten times greater, desire to enjoy the 'good things of this life;' brought up together in comfort and luxury, and not educated in a manner to fit me for fighting in the 'battle-field of life,' I come to man's estate, and discover myself dependent on the generous bounty of a brother, whose only claim to superior sagacity is the fact of coming into the world a year before me."

So saying, he turned and hurriedly left me. I felt grieved that he should in his heart blame me for his want of luck. I had always given him what I considered to be a just proportion of my yearly income; but if he had received ten times that amount, it would all have gone in betting and gambling, and in a few months he would have been as poor as ever.

Things went on quietly, and without

change for a week or two. Then I began to be sensible of a change in *her* behaviour to me. I could not say in what. Only now she seemed to avoid being alone with me, and at times spoke shortly and impatiently to me. For long I tried to make myself believe it was only fancy; but by degrees the heart-breaking truth forced itself on me. She was ceasing to love me. Perhaps learning to love another. If so, who was it who was robbing me of my idol? Who could it be but my own brother. Alas, alas! how could it be otherwise? Living in the same house, meeting every hour of the day, was it possible for my brother to resist such perfection? Still, I might be mistaken, and I determined to watch them closely. For days I saw nothing to indicate that my surmises were correct, and I began to think that it was but a lover's fears, and my heart grew light and happy again; and I went to find her, intending to tell her of my idle, groundless suspicions.

As I went through the garden, on my way to a greenhouse where the servants told me I should find her, I came suddenly on a sight which checked my further progress. Standing under the shelter of a tree were two people, a man and a woman—he, with his arm round her, tenderly supporting her, whilst she looked up in his face trustingly and lovingly.

It was my brother and my promised wife. As I stood still, rooted as it were to the spot spell-bound, their lips met in a long, clinging kiss.

With a groan, I turned and fled from the accursed spot; and reaching my room, threw myself on the bed, wild with grief and despair, and unable to collect my scattered thoughts. Nothing but the one terrible truth was ever before me: I had lost her! And he, my brother, whom I had loved as myself, had robbed me of her. Still, strange to say, no feeling of anger or resentment stirred my heart. Could I blame him for loving her? or her for loving him? He, who was handsomer far than I, clever, and learned in the ways of the world, was a more fitting mate for her than I was—poor, simple, weak-minded, blinded fool. I lay for hours, crushed and stunned, in a kind of stupor, and at length fell asleep, worn out by mental agitation.

Next morning, I awoke calmer, and able to think over the discovery I had made. With a decision and strength of mind very unusual

to me, I determined to seek out my brother, and tell him I knew all. Then I would see her, and release her from her promise to me. Better for her to be happy with another than to be my miserable, unloving wife. As for me, I would leave England and travel; better so, than see her the happy, devoted wife of another man. I found my brother, and told him what I had seen. I cannot tell how it came about, my memory fails me about all that took place at that time. He must, I think, have misunderstood me; for we quarrelled, and he struck me to the earth. He left my house at once, and I have seen him only once from that day to this, and then but for a moment, and unseen by him.

Bruised by my brother's hand, I was ashamed to meet *her*. But more grieved than angered by my brother's conduct, I wrote to her a simple letter, telling her all, and offering to release her. Her reply came only too soon. It was a kind, but ready acceptance of my offer. She could not, she said in it, deny her love for my brother. She still loved me with all the strength of a sister's love—alas, how cold to the love I felt for her!—but her heart was given to my brother, and with him alone could she be happy. At the same time, she added, that if on further consideration I insisted on making her my wife, she would, although reluctantly, perform her promise, and would try to make a good, faithful wife, but never a happy one.

What could I do but give her up? Was I, to satisfy a mean, selfish love, to drag the woman I professed to love beyond the whole world, into a wretched unhappiness, full of lifelong regrets and blighted hopes?

When we met again, it was as brother and sister. But the shock and struggle were more than I could bear, and I sank into ill-health, becoming nervous, and at times fanciful. My doctors advised change of air and scene, and accordingly I prepared to start for a tour on the Continent. But before I could get away, a diabolical plot was prepared and put in practice by my brother, which was to rob me of money, home, and even reason itself.

About a week before I proposed starting, I was rather surprised at receiving a call from two gentlemen, both strangers to me, who introduced themselves as consulting physicians, and said they had been requested to call and see me by my brother. Although astonished at such a display of interest on

my account being shown by him, I never for an instant suspected any sinister design on his part, and answered most of the questions put to me without hesitation. So much so, in fact, that the two doctors rose, and, wishing me good morning, said they were very glad to be able to report so favourably on me. As they were leaving the room, they stopped for a moment, and said a few words together in an undertone. I only caught *her* name, and felt myself reddened at the sound.

"Yes," said one, "you are right, we ought to try that subject."

Then, turning back, they began asking me what I took to be impertinent questions. I ordered them to leave, but they only questioned me further; until, wild with passion, I lost all self-control over myself, and tried to push them out. Little I suspected then that they were paid by my brother to examine me, and find an excuse for pronouncing me mad. Once in an asylum, I could easily be kept there, and my cruel brother would be able to enjoy my property undisturbed.

A few days after what I have just told you took place, I received a letter from my brother apologizing to me for his behaviour, and asking me to forgive him, and to meet him at a certain town, about twenty miles from my place. It was a cruel, hypocritical, deceitful letter, but I joyfully believed it, and gladly promised to meet him, eager to be once more reconciled to him.

When I got to the inn at the town where I was to meet him, I was told that he had not yet come, but that he had engaged a room; and I was shown into it. I waited a long time patiently, expecting my brother to come every moment; but he never came. Soon after dark, two men—rough, ill-looking fellows—came into the room without knocking. One of them walked straight up to me, and said I was to be good enough to go with them. I asked what their business was, but got no other reply than before—that I was to go with them. I told them I would not do so without knowing what they wanted. The one who had spoken first replied that they had authority to take me with them, and that it would be better for me to go quietly, and not compel them to use force. I stepped back, and, seizing the poker, told them that I would use it against the first one who laid a hand on me. Then I rang the bell violently. To my

surprise, the two men stood still, and made no attempt at escaping; and when the people of the inn came up to see what was the matter, they appealed to them to help them to secure me. Whilst I thus stood at bay, as it were, a door opened at my back, and, before I could turn round, some one threw a thick cloth over my head, completely covering me, and rendering me perfectly powerless to resist. Still I struggled, but hopelessly, and I was soon overpowered, gagged, and blindfolded; then my arms were pinioned to my side, and I was led out into the open air, and pushed into a carriage, and driven rapidly away. I soon gathered, from the conversation of those beside me, that I was being taken to a mad-house; and could not but surmise—what was the truth—that it was at the instigation of my brother that I was being taken there. The whole villainous scheme was now clear to me. The visit of the two doctors—real or sham, I knew not; the letter written to entice me from home, so as to carry me off easily, and without making a disturbance. My cruel, wicked brother, not content with stealing my love from me, was about to incarcerate me in a private asylum, so that he, being next heir to the property, might freely enjoy it without my having the means or the power of exposing him. After about an hour's drive, we stopped; and I was hurried out of the carriage into a house, and led, still blindfolded, up a long stair. When my eyes were uncovered, I found myself in a small room, scantily furnished, without a carpet on the bare boards, and lighted by a small, narrow window, barred on the outside with heavy iron bars. A small wooden bedstead at one end, and a single chair, were the only signs of habitation visible. It was a prison, not a bed-chamber.

I was at once unbound and ungagged, and left alone to my own bitter reflections. Day after day, my life was the same solitary, monotonous existence—the only exercise I got being an hour's walk, in company with a brutal keeper, who took a malicious pleasure in thwarting and bullying me. Letters I wrote in abundance, but none of them ever gained a reply; nor do I believe they were delivered.

Escape seemed impossible, guarded and watched as I was; and I began to lose all heart, and each day I became more hopeless and despairing. Gradually my health began to fail, and I got nervous and excit-

able, unable to keep still through the day or to sleep at night. This was what my gaolers were waiting for, to finish their hellish purpose. I was forced to take medicine every day, and sleeping draughts at night, containing morphia, until my poor brain began to wander, and for a few weeks I was raving mad. Then they relaxed their tortures: they had gained their end.

As I recovered my reason, my faculties seemed to be sharpened, and I began to plan means for escaping. I pretended to be subdued and timid, and by this means got greater liberty. But I could not devise any plan for getting outside the hated walls; and, had it not been for a trifling accident, I might probably have been still a prisoner. I was so quiet, and my keepers believed me to be so tractable and harmless, that when I was taken for my daily walk it was not thought necessary to confine my arms in a strait-waistcoat, and I was sometimes taken for rambles outside the asylum grounds.

One day my keeper, who was very fond of trout fishing, wished to have an hour or two's fishing in a stream a few miles distant. Of course his piscatorial pursuits had to be carried on with great caution, and without the knowledge of his master; and I was always bound over to secrecy. I was always well pleased when a fishing day was proposed, as these were the only pleasant days I had; and I hoped that some day or other I might by their means get an opportunity of escaping.

On the morning in question, we got to the stream, after calling at a friend's house for my keeper's rod and tackle, and my keeper began his amusement, making me keep close to him all the time. As we walked along the banks of the small river, we came to a deep pool, a favourite spot for trout, and my keeper set to work eagerly. As he walked gently along, keeping his eyes intently fixed on the water, in expectation of a rise, his foot caught on the root of a tree, and he stumbled forward, and fell head first into the deep water. Now was my chance; and without waiting a moment to see whether he could swim or not, I turned and fled, without knowing or caring in what direction I went. Towards evening, I found I was within a few miles of my own place; and, impelled by an inward impulse, I walked towards it, intending to take one last look at it before leaving England. I had often thought over what I would do when I got

free, and had decided to first make good my escape to another land, and then take means to recover my rights, and punish my brother for his unnatural conduct.

When I got to my house, it was dark; but the new moon shed a soft, silvery light over the familiar scenes, and, overcome by the sight of the many spots endeared to memory by the remembrance of my former love and happiness, I sat down on a garden seat, and, burying my face in my hands, burst into a flood of tears—the first I had shed for years.

As I sat there, I heard voices, and had barely time to hide myself behind some bushes, when *she* and my brother came down the gravel walk, arm in arm, and sat down on the seat I had just left. They were talking lowly; but I was so close to them that I distinctly heard every word. I was the subject of their conversation. She was pleading for me.

"Cannot you remove him now, dear William?" she said. "Surely, now there is no danger. They say he is quiet and gentle. Could we not bring him here and give him part of our house, and try to lessen his dreadful misfortune?"

"It is like your gentle nature, dearest wife." Was she then really this monster's wife? "But I cannot suffer you to live near such a dangerous madman," he said, in answer. "It is true that now he is quiet; but brought back amongst old scenes, with all their sad memories, his brain might again fail. Ah, you cannot imagine how dangerous and determined he is when excited! Never will I forget his fierce look, when he stood, poker in hand, the night we took him to the asylum. Had I not gone into the next room, and, opening the door behind him, suddenly thrown a table cloth over his head, he would have done mischief."

Oh, brother, brother!

"I often think of that dreadful time, dearest," she replied, shuddering, and drawing closer to him. "How your kind, tender heart must have bled for him. And yet he was ever gentle to me; and, before I knew you, I thought I loved him dearly."

I could not stay and listen longer. Another moment and I must have rushed forward and told her all. I fled.

Although they must have heard my retreating footsteps, they were unable to see me; and I made haste to leave the home of my fathers, never to return. Why should I

disturb *her* happiness by denouncing the man she loved and was wedded to? No, I would go, and leave her in happy ignorance.

But before doing so I would write to him and warn him not to betray *her*, as he had done me. I went to Liverpool, and finding a ship about to sail for Melbourne, engaged a steerage passage in her, paying for it by the proceeds of a valuable ring I had on my finger, and of which, for a wonder, I had not been robbed in the asylum. It is many years now since I left England—how many I do not know, nor do I wish to remember. My brain has never recovered the treatment I received so long ago; and at times I lose my reason, and have several times attempted to destroy myself—I have never any wish to injure others—and I have been four times in the Yarra Bind; but with kind, judicious treatment—very different to what I received in the private asylum—I have always soon recovered and been discharged.

A kind friend—the only person who knows who I am and where I am—often writes to me; and through him I hear that my brother is a kind husband to her whom I still love better than anything on earth. He has given up all his evil ways, and is one of the most respected men of his county, a justice of the peace, and a great promoter of charitable institutions. Little the world know how black-hearted a villain it is they honour.

“Poor George told his tale with many interruptions, and sometimes with great hesitation, and required a great deal of coaxing to finish it. Whether it is true or not I cannot say. It may be but the result of a fevered brain. But I have told it to you just as he told it to Charles and I.”

“What became of him?” asked Pat.

“I think he drowned himself in the Yarra,” I replied. “At least, shortly after he left us, and went to Melbourne, I saw in the *Argus* that a man whose description tallied with his was found drowned in the river.”

A STORY OF DENMARK.

IN days of old, a Danish king once loved a lady fair;
To win her fame, in her dear name, he loved to do and dare.
And dearest, next, unto his heart, was Fredericks-borg, his home;
From its fair towers, its summer bowers, but duty made him roam.

Rude wars had ravaged Denmark's coast, but now, the danger o'er,
King Olaf turned, his bosom yearned, for home and love once more.

He clasped his wife to him, and cried, “Oh, Thorah, dear to me,

I care for naught, I need not aught, save Fredericks-borg and thee;

I envy not the angelic host, nor God upon His throne;

To tarry here, with thee so dear; oh, that is Heaven alone.”

Fair Thorah pressed his hand, and said, “’Tis bliss with thee indeed;

With joy so fair, what can compare? what greater do we need?”

They spoke; the impious wish goes up; in vain a storm-blast rose—

An angel's wings the message brings, before the Lord it goes.

That night the royal lovers slept, to wake no more in life;

Yet still, around, that well-loved ground, roam Olaf and his wife.

Their presence filled the stately towers, till men forsook the spot;

Now crumbling walls, and ruined halls, to shades the place allot.

But oft, at eve, when saints of God may wander near the place,

Full many a wail their ears assail, with sobbing cries for grace:

“Oh, pray for us, thro' Christ the Lord, a boon, a boon we crave—

The lowest seat, e'en at the feet, of Him who died to save.”

“And rest until He comes, sweet rest,” a softer voice intones;

And then a sound floats all around, of weeping, and of moans.

A. QUARRY.

DOCTOR MIDDLETON'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “A DESPERATE CHARACTER.”

CHAPTER VI.

I RAN back into the Residency, and explained, in as few words as possible, the state of affairs.

Snatching up some things I thought might possibly be needed, I put on my hat and coat, and followed the man, who walked rapidly, sobbing as he went.

We passed down several streets, and entered an alley near the Coombe.

“What made you come for me?” I said to the man.

“Shure, herself knows you, an' wuldn't have nobody else, the crayter.”

“What's your name?”

“Me name, is it?”

“Yes—what's your wife's name?”

“Judy Lanigan, to be shure.”

"I don't know her."

"Troth, an' ye do, yer honner, well; an' sure she knows you, too, for a nice, kind young gentleman."

"Well, well, my man, perhaps so—we shall see."

The alley or street down which we were rapidly walking was called Skinners-alley. It had once been a place of some consideration, for the houses were tall and well-built; but it had fallen from its high estate, and was then inhabited by the lowest of the low. In point of fact, it was a place to be entered after dark with caution. But the doctor is a privileged person; and I felt no hesitation in following my guide into one of the most dilapidated houses in the street, the door of which stood wide open.

"Folly me close, yer honner. It's at the tip-top av the house, sir."

The man groped his way up a wide stone staircase, to the top of the house. There was no moon that night, and the darkness was Egyptian.

"Here you are, yer honner. Shure, the poor crayter's in here."

He opened a door, and a faint glimmer from an opposite window enabled me to find my way into the room.

"Cheer up, my good woman," I exclaimed. "Please God, you'll soon be all right again."

I fancied I heard a responsive groan.

"Wait a minute now, yer honner," said the man, "till I shstrike a light."

"Make haste," said I; and immediately the fellow slammed to the door, and locked it on the outside!

"Hallo!" I cried, "what is the meaning of this?"

I tried to open the door, but it resisted all my efforts. I groped my way around the room: there was no bed in it, nor any article of furniture whatever.

I next looked out of the window, but there was no hope of escape that way.

What was the meaning of it? No doubt I should have to remain where I was till morning.

Once more I felt my way round the room, until I reached the door, upon which I was unable to make the least impression.

I sat down upon the floor, with my back to the door, so that no one could enter without my knowledge; for I had ascertained that there was no other mode of ingress to the room, which was also without a fireplace.

For some time I sat with my eyes fixed on the window opposite—through which I could just see the faintest reflection of light in the cold, gray sky—and speculated upon the meaning of my extraordinary adventure. Then I began to wonder what the boys were up to in the hospital; and at last my thoughts reverted to her who had become for me the centre round which all things moved, and for which all things had been created. And thus musing, I fell asleep.

How long I slept I cannot tell, but it must have been some hours; for when I woke, benumbed by the draught that blew keenly in under the door, it was broad daylight. I then opened the window, which looked into a small yard, wherein a dirty old woman was engaged in hanging out some dirtier rags to dry.

"Hallo, missis!" I shouted to the old woman, who looked all round, and in every direction but the right one. "Hallo, missis! Come up, and let me out of this."

At length the beldame caught sight of me, where I was leaning half out of the little window; and, holding up her hands in amazement, croaked out—

"The saints purtect us! Whatever are you doin' there?"

"Nothing whatever," I replied; "but I'll feel extremely obliged to you if you'll come and let me out."

The old woman continued to look up at me, but did not offer to stir.

"I'll give you a shilling, my good woman, if you'll come up and let me out—the key is in the door outside."

"Faith! an' I will lit ye out in a crack, ye crayter," she ejaculated, hurrying into the house and up the stairs as fast as her old legs would let her; and presently arrived, panting and blowing, at the door, which she unlocked.

"Whatever brought ye here at all?" was once more her inquiry, when she had opened the room door, and received the promised reward.

"A man," I replied.

"A woman, more like," grinned the old hag, depositing the shilling in a capacious pocket.

"Is there any one of the name of Lanigan—Judy Lanigan—lives in this house?" I inquired.

"Is there? shure ye know there isn't!" replied the old woman in the most contemptuous manner.

"How should I know, my good woman? and if I did, why should I ask you?"

"Ah! git along wid ye now, ye Sassenach!" exclaimed the old lady, waving her hand at me in a most excited manner—"Git along wid ye, do; and don't be purtindin' ye don't know Judy Lanigan lives at number sivvin."

"I know nothing at all about her, my good woman," I repeated, as I prepared to descend the stairs.

"An' is it denying it ye'd be, ye bla'guard?" The situation was becoming unpleasant.

"My good woman—" I began.

"There, git along wid ye, do; or it's after callin' up the naibors I'll be. Sure—"

But I didn't wait to hear any more, and hurried down the stairs and into the street, much puzzled by my night's adventures and its morning complications, and made my way, as fast as I could, to the hospital.

It was about five o'clock when I reached that institution, which was just beginning to stir itself into life.

I rang the hall bell—not very gently, for I was a good deal excited—and the door was directly opened by the porter, who looked as if he had not been in bed all night.

"What's the matter, Black?"

"Matter is it?" he replied, repeating my question, *more Hibernico*, by way of answer.

"Yes, matter," I said again, not very patiently. "You look as if you'd been up all night."

"So I have; an' every sowl in the house, too—her ladyship an' all. Won't there be a quare row in the mornin', that's all!"

"Why—what has happened?"

"Happened, is it? Sure, mesilf culdn't till ye; but if ye'll be afther goin' into the Risidincy, may be ye'll see for yersilf, sir."

The table was covered with glasses and empty bottles, some of the contents of which had been scattered about the floor, as well as cards and broken glass.

The chairs were upset, and several of them smashed, and lying in the midst of the débris were—gracious goodness!—Charles Woodward and the barrister!

I was thunderstruck; but, stepping over their prostrate forms, made my way into the bed-room.

M'Lachlan was in his own bed, fast asleep. On mine lay Bull, in his clothes, over which he had evidently been violently sick—Bull, the Professor's abomination.

I shook Robert by the shoulder—none too tenderly.

"What in the world have you been doing?" I shouted in his ear.

"Eh, what?" he replied, quite coolly, sitting up in bed, and carrying at once the war into the enemy's country. "Oh, it's you. You're a nice sort of a fellow, you are, staying out all night. Some more of your saintly tricks, eh? Humbug!"

It would be impossible to express the supreme contempt he threw into the enunciation of the latter word.

"Robert," I exclaimed, "you have been drinking."

"No fear," he replied. "You don't catch this child at that sort of game, old chap. I'm not drunk, never was, and never will be."

"So much the better. But what do you mean by your insinuations? Was it by your direction I was played that trick last night?"

"Me? More likely Judy Lanigan, my friend, if anybody played you one."

"Come, come, M'Lachlan—this is too much of a good thing. I insist upon an immediate explanation."

"Do you mean to say you do not know her?"

"Say! I'll swear it. I never even heard the woman's name till I heard it spoken by the fellow who fetched me away from here last night; and I have never to my knowledge set eyes upon her in my life."

"And all that you'll swear to?"

"Yes; all that I swear to—most solemnly."

Robert whistled.

"I don't think *you* would go swear to a pack of lies, Jonathan."

"You may be certain of it, Robert."

"Well, it's an infernal shame, that's all I can say; and it must be an invention of that fellow's over there"—here Bob pointed with his chin at Bull—"for it was he that told us so last night. Let me shy a boot at him."

"Not yet," I said. "Wait till I get the other fellows away; then I must have an explanation with him myself, and when that is over you can take him in hand if you choose."

I woke up Woodward and the bald-headed barrister, who both looked sulky and ashamed. I said nothing to them then, but felt more sorry than I can express for the former.

When I returned to our bed-room I found Robert dressed, and Bull still fast asleep.

"That fellow's at the bottom of it all,

Jonathan—it was he egged the others on. There'd have been no row, and every one would have been away at ten, only for him."

"Why did you let him, David?"

"It was wrong, no doubt, Jonathan; but I was enjoying the fun so much that I never thought of the consequences."

"David, you're incorrigible."

"Maybe I am, old Jonathan. But wake up that fellow, if you're going to have it out with him; for my fingers are itching to pitch into him."

I shook the sleeper roughly, for I was in a downright rage with him.

"Get up, you scoundrel!"

He woke up, looking very much surprised.

"I hope you're ashamed of yourself?" I said.

"What for?" he asked.

"What for!" I repeated. "You know well what for. How dare you tell tales about me to the fellows last night, and get me locked up in Skinners-alley?"

"I never did."

"You did."

"Well," he answered, quite unabashed, "we couldn't have had anything of a proper spree unless I'd got you out of the way, with your puritanical airs."

"Defend yourself, sir!" I cried in a rage, throwing off my coat and rolling up my shirt sleeves.

"Come, none of that," said Bull, "or I'll call the porter."

"What," I exclaimed, "you are a coward, then!"

He was only a year younger than I was, and quite as heavy a man.

"You pitiful fellow!" cried Robert, scornfully.

"That's right," whimpered Bull again—"pitch into me both of you, do. That's what you call fair play, I suppose?"

"No," I answered; "you shall have to deal with me first, and then with M'Lachlan. Come on."

But the coward slunk into a corner, and I struck him in the face with my open hand.

He burst into tears.

"Now," I exclaimed, "out of this, and never let me see your face in these rooms again."

He sidled away as if he was afraid of being kicked.

Robert followed him, with the intention

of administering a parting salute; but I interfered.

"Let him go, Robert—don't dirty your boot by touching him."

And the rascal escaped without further punishment.

As the porter had predicted, there was a row.

I was called in before the committee, which sat next day, when the Rev. Mr. White, in scornful accents, demanded an explanation of what he was pleased to term my "disgraceful conduct."

"Sir," I replied, "when you have heard what I have to say, you may characterise my conduct as disgraceful, if you can; in the meantime, you have no right to pre-judge me, or assume that I am guilty."

"Certainly, you are blameless in the matter, Cochrane," observed the Professor, who was in the chair, when I had told all I knew of the occurrences of the previous night. "But Mr. Bull has complained to the committee that you have assaulted and beaten him. Is this true?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, "it is partly true. I struck him with my open hand, but only once, and that after very great provocation."

I then related how I had been decoyed away at his suggestion; and told them what calumnies he had circulated among the students concerning me.

"Hum!" grunted the Rev. Mr. White. "You have rendered yourself liable to an action at law, sir."

"I am quite ready to abide by all the consequences of my conduct, Mr. White," I replied, stiffly.

"Well, Cochrane," interposed the Professor, speaking in his blandest tones, "personally I cannot see that you are to blame in the matter; but I regret that your just indignation should have so far led you to forget yourself as to strike a fellow-pupil."

"I regret it now myself, sir."

The Professor bowed.

"You shall be acquainted with the decision of the committee, Cochrane. Will you send in Mr. M'Lachlan?"

"Mr. M'Lachlan," I replied, "much against my advice, went home yesterday. I have not seen him since."

"Hem!" coughed the Professor. "Foolish fellow. Let judgment go by default. That will do, Cochrane."

I bowed and retired.

The Residency was full of fellows, anxiously awaiting the decision of the committee; for Robert M'Lachlan was a universal favourite among them.

"Well," they all exclaimed, as I made my appearance, "has Bob got the sack?"

"I don't know," I replied. "They haven't finished taking evidence yet."

In about an hour I was recalled.

"Mr. Cochrane," began the Professor, "the committee generally exonerate you from all blame in this matter; but regret that you should have permitted yourself to strike a fellow-pupil."

"I repeat, sir, that I regret the circumstance deeply."

The Professor inclined his head gravely; but I thought I detected a faint smile on his lip, as if his own verdict would have been "Served him right!" had etiquette permitted him to say it.

He continued:

"With regard to Mr. M'Lachlan, I regret to be obliged to say that the committee are of opinion that his conduct throughout this affair has been reprehensible in the extreme; and they call upon him immediately to resign the post he holds in the hospital."

"Sir," I began, "M'Lachlan is very young, but the best-hearted fellow—"

"Mr. Cochrane," interrupted the Rev. Mr. White, "your desire to excuse your friend is, no doubt, very creditable to you; but the committee have given their fullest and most dispassionate consideration to his case, with the result just communicated to you by the learned Professor."

I bowed and retired. There was nothing more to be said.

The next day I returned to Carlton-terrace, and Biceps and Slim were appointed in our stead.

CHAPTER VII.

DURING my residence at St. Cuthbert's I had retained my room at Miss Fernley's, and occasionally went out there to dinner.

One day I had a long talk with Charles Woodward, the upshot of which was that I strongly advised him to get married as soon as he possibly could.

"I dare not," he replied, after I had exhausted all I had to say on the subject.

"You dare not! Nonsense, man. What on earth is to hinder you, if you choose? You have not been all these years in Dublin

without becoming acquainted with some suitable girl, who would be only too glad to take you, if you asked her."

"That's just it: I don't know a creature."

"Yes, you do."

I mentioned the names of several young ladies of our acquaintance.

"I have not the means," pleaded Charley.

"Folly," I replied. "You told me you had three hundred a year; and you expect to be ordained in a few months, when you'll get another seventy or eighty as curate somewhere. I wish I was as well off."

"I've half a mind to give up that curacy business, Tom," he replied, conscience-smitten. "I'm not fit for it."

"That you are not," I answered; "and I am glad indeed to hear you admit it."

Charley fired up.

"There are hundreds of men in the Church who are infinitely worse than I am."

Afterwards I once or twice asked him, jokingly, when we happened to meet, when the wedding was to be.

"I know no one," was his usual reply.

"Dear me!" I answered one day, "how can you say that when there are three maiden ladies in this house, any one of whom would jump at an offer from you with the most unbounded delight? Why don't you make up to Miss Sharman, for instance—you that are always craving after money?"

"Raw beefsteaks and all," he replied, laughing.

"Or Miss Matilda," I continued, heedlessly. "Why don't you propose for her?"

"By Jove!" he replied, "I will. She's fond of me, I know, and I've no doubt she'll make a devoted wife."

I laughed, for I imagined, of course, that he was joking; and began to talk about something else.

I was unable to visit Carlton-terrace for some days after this; and, when I did so, was thunderstruck; on entering the parlour, to find Miss Matilda and my friend Charley sitting close together on the sofa. I thought he had his arm round her waist; but, as he jumped up as I entered the room, I could not be certain.

"Dear me," I thought to myself, "I hope he has not been foolish enough to take my thoughtless joke au sérieux."

During dinner my worst fears were confirmed, upon hearing them address each other by their Christian names.

When I first heard Miss Matilda address

my friend as "Charles," I started and looked round the table, expecting to find every one equally surprised; but evidently the boarders had grown accustomed to it, for not one of them seemed to mind it in the least.

It appeared he had proposed for her directly after I had jokingly advised him to do so; and their engagement had been notified to the rest of the inmates the same day after dinner.

I was very sorry—more sorry than I can find words to express. I believed he had quite forgotten his Australian love; and it was my firm conviction that it would be better for him to marry. But a wife fifteen years older than himself!

I trembled for their future: and it was all my fault.

It may be supposed that I was anxious to have my own doubts, as to the identity of my mysterious charmer with David's sister, confirmed or refuted; but it was, nevertheless, a fact that, as the time approached, I shrank from the ordeal; and, under various pretexts, postponed the interview.

At last Robert would be put off no longer.

"You must come, Jonathan, and dine with us to-morrow. My mother is on thorns until she sees you, for I've told her a lot about you; and so is the governor, not to speak of Emmy. There, you needn't blush, old fellow—she won't look at you"—and so on.

I made up my mind to go.

The M'Lachlans lived at some distance from Carlton-terrace, at a place called Clonskeagh, on the river Dodder. Their house, which was a fine one, and reminded me much of Mr. Harney's mansion at Mount Hopeless, stood in the centre of a park some seven or eight Irish acres in extent, part of which was laid out as lawn, pleasure grounds, and gardens.

There was also a splendid range of conservatories adjoining the house; for Mr. M'Lachlan was fond of flowers, and spent large sums of money in buying choice specimens.

I was very much attached to Robert, and had had no scruple about wooing and, if possible, winning for my wife his sister, providing she really proved to be the mysterious beauty who had stolen my heart—and I was almost sure she must be, for the likeness to my friend was striking; but when I beheld the state of oppressive grandeur in

which the family lived, their massive plate, the liveried servants, the number of the courses at dinner, the choice wines, and the general aspect of affluence that pervaded everything about the place, my heart failed me.

How was it possible that Robert could have put up with the residents' quarters and fare at St. Cuthbert's for six months, after having been accustomed to such luxury?

It was a problem I could not solve: he must be very much attached to his profession. I forgot that there is such a thing—shall I say as Destiny, or Fate?

TABLE TALK.

A FRIEND of mine who is very musical, and who imagines that I am the same, has often amused me by telling me stories of what he is pleased to call the vandalism of non-musical people; stories which convey to me much more an idea of amusement than of the indignation felt by him. For instance, he told me, with a burst of contempt and wrath, that he was talking a few years ago to a man who said that he was shortly going to London. "Of course," said my friend, who could then think of but one thing, "you are going to the Handel Festival?" "Handle Festival?" said the other. "Handle Festival! Never heard of it. *The handle of what?*" My friend also told me, with much contempt, that he had seen in a music shop the "Hallelujah Chorus" arranged for *two flutes*. This again presented to me a ludicrous idea as I thought of the tootling of those tremendous passages. There was another thing which he had also seen, which seems absurd to me, but which, I fear, a non-musical reader will not appreciate: the overture to "Egmont" arranged for one violin. The utter hopelessness of the attempt of *one fiddle* to cope with that colossal outline will strike any musician.

A CORRESPONDENT: Assuredly Sidney Smith was in the wrong when he said that it required a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head, or the seductiveness of the joke may have misled him into saying what he probably did not really think. For residence in the "land o' cakes" has convinced me that there is much humour among the inhabitants, and that of a peculiarly dry description not to be met with elsewhere. I remember a minister resting awhile

at a roadside cottage on his way to his kirk. A shower of rain came on, in face of which he did not like to proceed, and get wet through. "Bear wi' it, meenister," said the old lady, "bear wi' it a wee; for"—with a wooden smile—"ye'll aye be dry eno' when ye get intue the pu'pit." What happened to me the next day is not a joke, but characteristic. I trod on the gouty toe of an old laird on board of a Clyde steamboat. "Oh, I beg your pardon," said I, as I turned round, apologetically. "And ye hae muckle need tae, young mon," said the incensed laird, dancing with agony.

ONE OF THE officers of Frederick the Great's army wore a watch chain, but could not afford the watch, the place of which he supplied by a bullet. Some imp prompted the monarch, when he found this out, to ask him maliciously what o'clock it was. The officer was naturally greatly embarrassed, but recovered from his embarrassment, and said, with admirable tact, "Sire, I am a poor man, and therefore cannot afford a watch; but I have got what is much better. This" (producing the bullet) "reminds me, every time I see it, of my duty to your majesty." The King, much admiring this speech, pulled off his own watch, which was set with brilliants, and insisted on the officer accepting it.

A CORRESPONDENT: I trust you will kindly allow me space to mention the three most devoted exhibitions of gallantry that I have heard of during a service of twenty years. The first is the well-known one of the immortal Henri IV. at Tory (and here I would observe, en parenthèse, that I am relieved to find that Mr. Hayward, while generally upsetting the silly ad captandum speeches attributed commonly to Wellington, Nelson, and the like, has usually retained the record of these noble acts), in which he bound a white plume on his helmet before rushing into the slaughter, directing his retainers to follow it to victory. Second is the heroic action of Arnold von Winkelried, who collected as many of the opposing Austrian spears as he could in his arms, plunging them all into his body—causing his own immediate death, but opening the long-fought-for lane in the phalanx, for the Swiss behind him. Third is the case of Lieutenant Salkeld, of the Bengal Engineers (and here let me, as a comrade in

arms, bear a passing tribute to the worth of the most gallant corps to which he belonged), whose duty it was, at the siege of Delhi, to blow open one of the gates; who was severely wounded on his way to it; but who managed to crawl there, and had just strength enough left to fix the bag of powder and to ignite the fuze; flinging the latter into the former, and being blown up along with it. The Victoria Cross was, most properly, sent to his relations as a last testimony to his noble conduct.

A CORRESPONDENT: I have recently heard two stories about Israelites, which I know will be amusing, and which I hope will be new, to your readers. The first is of Sir Moses Montefiore. When negotiating a loan on the Bourse, on which he was very "keen," a small knot of capitalists approached him. "Mon Dieu," said one, "il va nous avaler tous." "Pardon, monsieur," said Sir Moses, with a "fin sourire," "ma religion me le defend." The second is of a German Jew who was eating a pork chop in a thunderstorm. On hearing an unusually loud clap, he laid down his knife and fork, and observed, "Vell, did any poty efer hear such a fuss apout a liddle pid o' bork!"

I REMEMBER a rather diverting incident that happened when I was returning from India. "How's her head?" said the skipper, as he reached the top of the companion, to the man at the wheel. "Tank you, sar," said the black servant of an old Indian lady, who followed him, "a little better to-day." The skipper was too full of indignation and of contempt to reprove him.

"CHILD," said a national schoolmaster, "who made your vile body?" "Well, sir," said the little girl, "it's not a good one, but isn't it rather hard to call it vile? It was mother made it, and sister made the skirt."

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CHAPTER VIII.



M R S. M'LACHLAN received me very kindly, without an atom of restraint or formality, and at once set me completely at my ease.

"We have heard so much of you, Mr. Cochrane, from Robert, that you are more like an old friend than a stranger; and I hope you will make yourself

at home, and come here whenever you feel inclined, without waiting for any further invitation."

I made a suitable reply, and Robert exclaimed—

"I'll bring him every day, mother, until you're tired to death of him, as I was at the hospital. See if I don't!"

Mrs. M'Lachlan smiled fondly at her handsome son.

"Robert has such spirits," she said apologetically. "I am sure we cannot be too thankful that he has had you for an associate at St. Cuthbert's, Mr. Cochrane."

I bowed, and the lady continued—

"It was much against Mr. M'Lachlan's wish and mine that he ever began to study for the profession, honourable and worthy of all praise though I acknowledge it to be;

for we wished him to have kept on the business, which must pass away from the family in time, as he is our only son. But he has set his face against the shop, as he persists in calling it—wilful boy that he is."

"Who are you calling a boy, mum?" demanded the youth, drawing himself up to his full height, and immediately rushing at his mother, whom he lifted off her chair, and raised high above his head, where he held her with perfect ease, although her proportions were by no means insignificant, until the lady cried for mercy, when he let her down, kissing her a dozen times at least, in the most boisterous manner, and much to the discomfiture of her cap and hair.

"Mr. Cochrane, are you not ashamed of your friend?" demanded the mother, pretending to be angry.

I laughed, but made no reply.

"Dear me!" she continued, addressing her son, "you naughty boy, you have made me not fit to be seen. Ring the bell for Janet."

Bob affected intense regret, and pulled the bell so hard that he pulled it down.

Presently Janet, an elderly Scotchwoman with very red hair, made her appearance, and inquired "Mistress M'Lachlan's pleasure," in the strongest and most unmitigated Northern accent I had ever heard.

"I want you to arrange my hair, Janet. This graceless son of mine has pulled it down."

"Hech! Maister Robert, I wonder at ye!" exclaimed the handmaiden, addressing the hope of the house, with a good-humoured smile lurking about the corners of her particularly capacious mouth. "But ye're always at some mischief."

"Be off!" shouted Robert, "or I'll throw the broom at you."

Janet retired precipitately, and Mrs. M'Lachlan followed.

"What a wild fellow you are, David," I

said, when his mother had left the room. "And what astounding liberties you take with Mrs. M'Lachlan."

"Pooh!" laughed Bob, "Mrs. M'Lachlan enjoys it. Bless you! she thinks there never was the like of this child in the world."

"Have you as little respect for your father, David?"

"The gov?—oh, that's quite a different thing, Jonathan. You see, he would have stuck me into the shop; and because I didn't see it, he cut up rough, and refused point blank to buy me a commission."

"You won't?" said I.

"I won't," said he.

"I'll enlist if you don't," said I.

"Away with you," said he.

"See if I don't," said I—

"My dear David," I interrupted, "pity my ears, and leave out your 'said Is,' and 'said hes.' It puts me in mind of an old woman I once heard at Ringsend."

"Why, what did she say, Jonathan?"

"She was telling a story to some friend, and repeated the words 'said I,' 'said he,' 'said she,' 'says I,' so often that I'm sure the party she was talking to must have felt as utterly in the dark as I did as to the identity of the hero or heroine of her tale."

"Is that all?"

"What more do you want?"

"Bah!" replied Robert, "you've always got some cock-and-bull sort of a yarn, old Jonathan, that fills a fellow full of expectation, and there's nothing in it after all—just like your old woman's—bah!"

Here Mrs. M'Lachlan returned, with her hair in perfect order, and was threatened by her son, who pretended to disarrange it, but refrained from again laying hands on Janet's artistic work.

"Would you like to walk through the conservatory, Mr. Cochrane?" presently inquired the lady of the house. "We have a great many plants from Australia, which will interest you, I dare say."

"Thank you," I replied, "it will give me great pleasure. You have no idea how anything coming from my own country affects me. I am foolishly fond of anything that comes from my native land."

"Don't say foolishly, Mr. Cochrane—the sentiment does you great credit."

I bowed, and we then inspected the plants, when Mrs. M'Lachlan pointed out the banksias, acacias, correas, Stanleyas, humeas, and numerous other flowers and

shrubs of Australian origin; but so developed and improved that I could scarcely identify them with the plants bearing the same names with which I had been so familiar in the bush.

"Your gardener must be a very clever man, Mrs. M'Lachlan," I observed, when I had made the tour of the conservatories.

"I think he is," she replied, "and he is particularly successful with the Australians, which have a special interest for him. He was employed for some years in the Botanical Gardens at Melbourne, where he was getting on very well, until his wife's ill-health obliged him to return home. By the bye, is not the weather oppressively hot in Australia?"

"Not generally, Mrs. M'Lachlan—only occasionally, when the hot winds are blowing; and they are of nothing like so frequent occurrence as your cold, easterly winds are over here, nor so prejudicial to health."

"Oh!" mildly exclaimed Mrs. M'Lachlan.

Evidently, the subject was one in which she took no interest, or possibly she was thinking of something else.

The inspection of the plants over, we returned to the drawing-room, where we found Robert—who had excused himself from accompanying us under the pretext of having something to read—fast asleep on the sofa, very much in the attitude of Miss Hosmer's "Sleeping Faun."

I could excuse his mother's look of intense admiration as she stooped over and kissed him—he was smiling as she did so—for I can safely say I never saw so beautiful a face; and I was once more irresistibly reminded of my "mysterious charmer," as he persisted in calling my fair unknown, and I felt sure she must be his sister.

He was awakened by the maternal embrace, and pretended to be very much ashamed.

"Is dinner nearly ready?" was his next inquiry. "Aint you hungry, Jonathan? If you aint, I am. I say, mother, you'll starve Jonathan out and out, if you don't let him get his dinner soon; for, remember, he's used to dine at twelve, if not earlier, in his own country."

Mrs. M'Lachlan looked surprised.

"Robert means," I explained, "when I was in the bush, travelling about. At home, at my father's, we usually dined about six, as you do."

"Oh, indeed!" once more mildly exclaimed the lady of the house, who appeared to feel little interest in my dinner hour, and added—"I fear Robert is an incorrigible joker, Mr. Cochrane. I tremble when I think what a number of scrapes he must have fallen into at the hospital, if he had not had you with him to steady him."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Robert, pretending to cry, "wasn't it well the poor itty ting had its nurse with it, to take care of it—oh!"

"I was so thankful," continued the lady, unheeding the interruption, "when he got home safe, without having committed himself."

I glanced at the culprit, and, as my eye met his, he winked, frowned, and put his finger to his lips—a pantomime which escaped his mother's observation.

"Oh, oh! Master Bob," I thought, "so you have held your tongue, have you? I hope you have not told any stories."

Just then a carriage drove up to the hall door, and presently my friend's father entered the drawing-room.

Mr. M'Lachlan was a very fine man, about forty-seven or forty-eight years of age, I thought; tall and broad-shouldered. He had a frank, open expression of countenance, gray eyes, an enormous brown beard, and a deficiency of hair on the crown of his head—a defect which rather increased the effect of a naturally high forehead.

It was not difficult to fancy that in his youth he had borne a coarse resemblance to his son, or perhaps I should say that his son was a handsome likeness of what the father had been in his youth; but there was as great a difference between them as between a china plate and a delf one.

Mr. M'Lachlan first kissed his wife, and then held out his hand to me.

"Mr. Cochrane, I presume."

He spoke with a slight and rather agreeable Scotch accent. He shook me very heartily by the hand.

"I am right glad to make your acquaintance. I've heard a great deal about you from Robbie. How you—"

"Stuck up the fellow in the bush, and robbed him of five hundred pounds, eh?" interpolated his incorrigible son.

The father shook his head, and continued—

"How you kept yon boy of mine out of mischief."

"What a character to give a fellow!" whimpered Bob, sticking his knuckles into his eyes, and pretending to cry.

"Have you been through the conservatories?" next inquired my friend's father.

"Yes," I replied; "your plants are magnificent."

"Did they show you the new hybrid Andromeda?"

"No—that is, I'm not sure."

"Come, and I'll show it to you. Watson offered me a hundred pounds for it yesterday."

And so on.

I did my best to admire the new hybrid, but fear I was not successful in the attempt; for Mr. M'Lachlan presently remarked—

"You don't care much for flowers, Cochrane, I can see."

"Excuse me," I replied.

But just as I was endeavouring to exculpate myself, a servant came to announce that dinner was ready, and saved me the trouble and embarrassment of trying to vindicate my floral taste.

I had the honour of conducting Mrs. M'Lachlan to the dining-room. Bob and his father followed.

"Where is Miss M'Lachlan?" was a question that had been on the tip of my tongue a dozen times that afternoon, but which I nevertheless dared not ask. Robert, however, as we sat down to dinner, put it to his mother.

"Where's Emmy, mother?"

"Gone to spend the day with Mrs. Bennett."

Bennett was my Professor's name.

"How tiresome!" exclaimed my friend. "I wanted particularly to introduce her to Jonathan."

"A pleasure deferred," I said, feeling it incumbent upon me to say something, as they were all looking at me.

"Jonathan!" repeated Mrs. M'Lachlan. "What a very odd name! One would suppose you were an American, and not an Australian, Mr. Cochrane."

"It is not my real name," I said, blushing—at least, Bob said I did, and I never knew him tell an untruth—"only one that Robert has given me."

"Because you called me David," explained the youth.

Mr. M'Lachlan laughed slightly.

"It is to be hoped you'll meet with a better fate than your namesake, Coch-rane."

"I hope so," I replied.

"By the way, I saw the Professor this morning," presently observed the head of the family.

Whereupon it became Robert's turn to blush—which he did, vividly. But it was a false alarm. The dear old fellow had not mentioned his pupil's name in connection with the late esclandre at St. Cuthbert's—probably deeming that the father was acquainted with it—and Bob breathed freely once more.

On the whole, I spent a very pleasant evening, when once the feeling of oppression generated by the unaccustomed grandeur that surrounded me had worn off; but, nevertheless, I could not divest myself of a sense of disappointment—for I had not seen Miss M'Lachlan.

It was getting late, and I felt that I could not, with any propriety, much longer protract my visit, when the sound of wheels on the gravel outside set my heart beating at a greatly accelerated pace.

The crisis was at hand;—but there, what was there in common between a poor wretch such as I, and the only daughter of a wealthy house? What presumption on the part of a humble sparrow to dream of mating with so gay a bird!

I took myself severely and seriously to task, and by the time the young lady entered the drawing-room I was, outwardly at least, perfectly calm and self-possessed.

Emma—I dared to call her by her name to myself—was, I knew, rather more than a year her brother's senior; but the lady who made her appearance was thirty at least, and no more like my friend than I was.

I was dreadfully disappointed; and yet, paradoxical as it may appear, I felt immensely relieved.

My fair unknown was not David's sister, after all, in spite of the wonderful resemblance. Had she been, adieu to all my hopes of ever calling her my wife; for I had never dared to woo the heiress of such wealth as surrounded me at The Grove, as Mr. M'Lachlan's place was named.

"I hope you've spent a pleasant evening, my dear?" inquired the mistress of the house of the new arrival; who replied, in anything but a sweet or musical voice—

"Oh, yes, thank you."

"What have you done with Sissy?" further demanded Mrs. M'Lachlan.

"Sissy," replied the lady, "was so thoroughly done up, she has gone to bed. She said she could not face the drawing-room, especially when she heard there was a visitor."

I had stood up on the lady's entrance, expecting to be introduced; but although she looked very hard at me as she pronounced the word "visitor," it apparently did not occur to either my host or hostess that any such ceremony was called for.

I then advanced, and wished Mr. and Mrs. M'Lachlan good night. They took leave of me very cordially, and pressed me to visit them again shortly. I mumbled something, which doubtless they took for an assent; but I had no intention of troubling them again in a hurry.

"I'll walk with you to the gate, old fellow," said Robert, "and take a pull at my pipe as we go along. The mum don't hold with my smoking."

Several times during our walk down the avenue I was on the point of asking my friend if the lady was his sister, but something or other prevented me. But she was, of course; and although the father and mother evidently approved of me as a friend and companion for their son, it was equally apparent that they had no intention of permitting me to become on terms of intimacy with their daughter.

Were they afraid of my making love to her, I wondered?

"I certainly shall not visit them again in a hurry," I resolved within myself after I had parted from Robert at the gate. "With all her money, she'd be no acquisition. Why, she has as sour a face almost as Mrs. Brown."

Our folks had all retired when I arrived at Carlton-terrace; but it was a long time before I went to bed; and when at last I forced myself to undress and lie down, I lay tossing about till nearly daylight, when at last I fell asleep, to dream that I was going to be married to my fair unknown; who, when the fatal knot had been irrevocably tied, lifted up her blond veil, and, to my horror, disclosed the mature and acidulous features of the lady superintendent at St. Cuthbert's. The shock was too great for human nature to endure—and sleep.

I awoke, and the ghost howled dismally

through my room. I had long ceased to notice it, but had not as yet succeeded in tracing the dreary sound to its origin.

THE MAP OF EUROPE.

HOW old is the world? How long has man lived on the earth? These two questions have been long agitated, and very different answers have been given. Perhaps there are not many, even of those who respect the Bible, who accept literally that interpretation of the Mosaic cosmogony in which our forefathers were willing to acquiesce. The six days of Creation may have been periods of time, typical of ordinary days, but not identical with them. Ages may have intervened between the first creation of matter and the date when our earth assumed its present state. So again with regard to the age of man. The names of the antediluvian patriarchs may stand each for a generation or a dynasty. Names may have slipped out of the text, the retention of which would have lengthened the early ages of sacred history by centuries. The discrepancy might not be so great between the Hebrew chronology and that deduced from the study of ancient Indian, Assyrian, or Egyptian remains, if we really had the genuine version of the first before us. As it is, the present Hebrew text and the Septuagint differ by more than 1,300 years. The firmest believer in verbal inspiration, in the face of this discrepancy, cannot pretend to deduce the age of man from the sacred writings, as they stand. And therefore theology should not, and indeed generally does not, quarrel with science for endeavouring to solve the problem by her own methods. It may be that it defies exact solution. Perhaps we must rest content with nearer and nearer approximations to the truth, yet not hope ever to hold it absolutely within our grasp. But as the alchemists never found the philosopher's stone or the elixir vitæ, yet in their search stumbled on many a useful discovery, so in other cases—I do not say in all—the search after a particular truth is more valuable than would be the possession of the truth. Here, at all events, the learned are very far from having reached the exact truth. But by a comparison of systems of chronology, of ancient records, and of other relics of antiquity, they have arrived at an agreement that mankind has dwelt on this earth, and

possessed, moreover, some kind of civilization for almost countless ages. Then there are the deductions of ethnology and of comparative philology, all tending to the same result. While, for the length of time which this earth endured before man ever inhabited it, geology and astronomy have something to say. On the whole, he would be a bold man who should undertake to fix the precise age of the world within some thousands of years. And no less daring would the geographer be who should insert in a new atlas a map to illustrate the supposed aspect of Europe at some tremendously early period. It is plain that, the older the world is, the greater and more numerous are likely to be the changes which have passed over it, and the more hopeless would be the attempt to reproduce its primeval state. Science must advance very much before we can hope to have maps of the glacier period or the age of ichthyosauri.

But within more recent times there have been no slight changes in the physical features of Europe, some of which indeed are still in progress. First, there are changes caused by the sea retiring—to speak in popular phraseology—or, rather, by the land rising—to use the more exact language of science. The Latin writers speak of the “*Insula Batavorum*” as a true island. But the Rhine silted up the lower part of its own channel, until the island became mainland; and its thrifty inhabitants reclaimed acres upon acres from the hungry sea by banking, and acres more by draining. Where now the train whirls by neat villas nestling in pretty groves and surrounded by the greenest of meadows, there, not long ago, was the lake of Haarlem; and already they talk of draining the Zuyder Zee, and reducing Amsterdam to an inland town. Russia is said to be physically, as well as politically, the youngest country in Europe. Perhaps when the classical Scythians and Sarmatians wandered over its steppes, the Arctic Ocean came much farther south than now; and the Hyperborean mountains, supposed to bound the east of Europe on its northern side, had no existence but in the imagination of poets, or the distant view of icebergs of which some traveller to that northern shore had brought away a distorted impression. A similar process may be observed to be going on in many parts of the world. In the first century, St. Paul “took ship at Ephesus.” The ruins of that mighty

city are now some ten miles from the sea, towards which a sluggish stream (Homer's Cayster) can scarce force its way through a pestiferous, reedy marsh. Yet still is pointed out the quay, the walls conjectured to have belonged to the Custom House, and even the remains of a huge stone staple to which ships may have once been fastened. Smyrna has taken the place of Ephesus; but Smyrna's noble bay is filling up, partly with sand brought down from the mountains, partly no doubt owing to volcanic action, to which the frequent shocks of earthquake testify. So in Morocco, I have no doubt that the town of Tetuan once stood on the sea, whereas now it is distant six miles of level ground, which the winter rain converts into a perfect swamp. Nor should we forget the ancient traditions of a continent of Atlantis. If it ever really existed, it must have occupied more or less of the bed of the Atlantic. Is it possible that the ancestors of the Peruvians and Mexicans—so unlike the North American Indians—migrated from the south of Europe, and perhaps walked across dry-shod? It is certainly remarkable that, while the Greeks claimed the name of Atlas for a Greek word, *Atlan* is the name of a place in Mexico, *atla* is said to mean *water*, and *tl* is notoriously a common Mexican combination.

This leads us to remark how, secondly, the sea has made many encroachments on the land. It has been supposed that England and France were once united more closely than by any treaty of commerce. No one who has seen the Channel Islands can doubt that they were formerly joined to one another and to the mainland. Virgil tells us how the Straits of Messina were formed, and Sicily separated from Italy by a convulsion of nature. We need not suppose, because ships now pass so easily between Scylla and Charybdis, that the channel was always broad enough to be safe and pleasant. The great resemblance between the southern shore of Spain and the Moorish coast has been often noticed. Sitting, as the traveller may do, in a garden arbour above Tangier, and looking across from Africa to Europe, from Tangier to Tarifa Point, we cannot well help speculating on the probability of the two having been one land. If so, the celebrated monkeys may have come across from the Apes' Hill to Gibraltar more pleasantly than by creeping along the submarine passage which is said

to exist. It is the same at the other end of the Mediterranean, where Europe passes almost imperceptibly into Asia, and the Bosphorus is all but bridged by the Cyanean Rocks, Byron's "blue Symplegades."

Thirdly, we shall be in more danger of underrating than exaggerating the effects of disforestation. Twenty or five and twenty centuries ago, it is probable that Europe was little else than one huge forest. How small a part now remains! The Romans speak of the woods in England as trackless. Once they were large enough to shelter the wolf, probably the bear, the lynx, the marten, and in the swamps which accompanied the woods the beaver, whose former presence is attested by many names of places. Now the swamps are mostly dried up, and the woods cut. Very different is the England of to-day from even that land of the middle ages where Robin Hood and Little John made merry under the greenwood tree, when a squirrel might have travelled from Sheffield to Leicester without touching the ground. On the whole, the change has no doubt been beneficial to a climate whose fault is dampness. It is the same in Germany—which is, however, still a well-wooded country, though not, as when the Hercynian forest stretched from Lithuania to the Upper Rhine valley, and teemed with elk and auroch. France, on the other hand, has probably suffered from the loss of forest land. It is a trite remark that France scarcely deserves, when measured by English taste, her title of *La Belle*. It is usual to explain this by saying that the French and English standards differ. I believe this is not the whole truth. Names often stick after their propriety has ceased to hold good, and it may be that many a mile of that flat, monotonous ground which now wearies the eye of the traveller was once brightened by standing timber. In the south-east of France, the face of the country has been seriously injured by its loss. If we may trust Blanquet, as quoted in Marsh's "Man and Nature," there is every prospect of the lands bordering on the French Alps becoming a complete desert, as arid, though not as extensive, as those of Asia and Africa. The absence of trees makes the springs dry up; the soil becomes unproductive; the efforts of the farmer are vain; the air is dry and penetrating; the summer heat and the winter cold are alike increased; eventually the inhabitants are obliged to abandon the

scenes which they have ceased to love, as having long given over the expected grateful return for labour.

The case is still stronger in Spain. The Spanish hatred of a tree is proverbial. Having long ago discounted the profits to be derived from forest land, Spain has become a land almost without a tree. I do not know a more melancholy railroad journey than that from Pancorbo, on the northern line, to Valladolid and onward. The barren plains of Castile, the interminable serrated hills of chalk, the almost total absence of any green thing more prominent than vine-plants which hardly exceed the size of strawberries, and this under a glowing sun, and swept in winter by a piercing wind, give the traveller from northern Europe a fair idea of the African desert. So is it again in Sicily, once so rich an island, now almost barren. So in Greece, where there is now scarcely a river deserving the name. So, above all, in the Greek islands of the Archipelago, which are now little better than barren rocks, deriving their only beauty from the force of contrast with the lustrous blue of the Argean, and the lovely prismatic tints with which the rarefied air clothes every distant object. To form a good idea of forest, we must go to the New World; and perhaps no one who has not crossed the Atlantic has any conception of how completely the States as far west as the edge of the Great Prairie form one huge forest, with very scanty clearings.

Maps, after all, unless specially constructed for this express purpose, give very little impression of physical features. What most strikes the cursory observer is the presence of broad lines of colour distinguishing the political divisions. It is here that we mark the chief difference between an ancient and a modern atlas. And could we have not only an "*orbis veteribus notus*," but also a "*veterrimis notus*," and a series showing the several periods onward, the differences would be very remarkable. And no two of the series would differ more, we may be sure, than a European atlas for 1873, and one for 1973, could we have such a thing before us. Here a distinction should be made between national changes and political. By national changes is meant the appearance of a new nation on the scene of the European theatre, provided the newcomers spread sufficiently, and remain long enough to impart a fresh aspect to the map

of Europe. Have we seen the last of such introductions? Europe has been again and again repeopled from Asia, and there are persons who have gone so far as to predict a Chinese invasion! It is true that, in some sort, America is suffering an invasion of the Celestials, and there was some talk of introducing them to work in the Welsh collieries. But John Chinaman has rarely aimed at more than getting his pockets filled by Western barbarians, and then returning to his own land. It does seem incredible that he should ever invade Europe in hostile array; equally improbable that European civilization should ever become so weak as to fall before an army led by mandarins. However, it is hard enough to gather together the results of the far past, without trying to forecast the future.

It is equally hopeless to speculate on the appearance of Europe in the so-called Ages of Stone, Bronze, and Iron. Considerable doubt has lately been thrown on these divisions, which are so much in vogue with Danish archaeologists. A good story is told of the opening of a tumulus, the remains in which a Danish expert pronounced to be of the Stone Age, and dating back thousands of years before Christ. On digging a little deeper, the excavators, side by side with other stone implements, lighted on a Roman vase and a coin of Constantine II.! Very likely it is for want of training and experience, but I must confess that, in looking over the supposed relics of the Stone Age in the Ethnographic Museum at Munich, I was tempted to think that several of the knives, arrow-heads, &c., were mere water-worn and weather-beaten stones, never manufactured by man's skill or for his use.

To come to more recent and civilized times. I shall distinguish six periods of national introductions:—

Period I. The Cushite, or Cufic.—This is altogether uncertain, and has been placed first with great hesitation. But any one who reads Baldwin's "*Pre-Historic Nations*" will see reason to believe that there existed, at a very early age, a highly civilized people, addicted for the most part to maritime pursuits. It is probable that they started from Arabia, and were long afterwards represented there by the Himyarites. In Europe, a branch of them are known to us as the Phœnicians and Carthaginians. The whole constitution of Carthage, if I mistake not, bespeaks a very ancient people in their de-

cline. How far they were represented in middle and northern Europe we have no means of determining, but at least they would found colonies and trading stations. Traces of them would be found in India; and there is said to be an ancient Indian map which marks very correctly the position of the British Isles, Iceland, and the shores of the Baltic.

Period II. The Ugrian.—It is probable that this very early civilization was overthrown, at least as regards northern Europe, by the irruption of hordes from northern Asia. At this time, our map would show one great division between the uncivilized north and the still civilized south. One part of the Ugrian invaders attained a certain amount of civilization, and survives under the name of Finns. This is not their own name, but bestowed by foreigners at an early period—for Tacitus is probably speaking of them when he mentions the Fenni. He is not very clear as to their situation, but renders it probable that they extended farther south than now. There are two kindred races at least in Europe, but both entered this continent at a later period. The Magyars under Arpad conquered Hungary in 889, and had been preceded by Attila, who founded, as every one knows, the city of Buda. The Turks appeared in Europe still later. I said "two at least," for here many or most authorities refer to the Basques. Some of my readers may have been in the south-west of France, and there have made acquaintance with this curious people and their wonderful language—"the riddle of philology," as it has been called. They may have wandered into a church, while a Basque preacher was holding forth, and found that they could not understand one word. Or they may have lost their way in the woods, as I once did, and on arriving at a cottage have been driven to converse by signs, and finally have been escorted by a small boy, who declined the proffered gratuity with the word "et" ("no"). There are not many Basque words so short as this. "Woman," if I rightly remember, is "ençustogouya;" and this appears to me to be about the average length of a Basque word. Was there a time when such melting polysyllables formed the speech of all Europe? There are some reasons for thinking that it was so. On the other hand, it has been urged that no people ever occupies a country for long without leaving traces of their

language, at least in names of places. And no such traces have been found farther east than the present Basque provinces of France and Spain. The objection proves too much, for it renders it an impossibility to account for the Basques. Unless they grew out of the soil, as the ancient Athenians fancied themselves to have done, or were separately created from the rest of mankind, they must have come from somewhere. And it is not hard to understand that their conquerors, who used a briefer and sterner speech, may have utterly rejected the Basque names as being nowise akin to their own.

Period III. This we make the Keltic.—Though the head-quarters of the Keltic race are now confined to the north-west of Europe, there are abundant traces of them in many other parts. It has been thought that they journeyed, like most of the European peoples, from the plateau of Central Asia in two divisions, one of which took a northerly and the other a southerly route. This will help to explain the difficulties that have been raised about their language. More than one linguist has connected it with Turanian speech—that is, the class of languages spoken by the Tartars and others. Professor Schleicher places it very near Latin, and others have tried to show that it is related to Teutonic or to Lithuanian. Now, if there is one point more characteristic than another of the Kelts, it is that they are both plastic and enduring. We see this in the way in which the Welsh have thoroughly thrown themselves into English nationality, without losing their own. So, again, with the Bretons in France. And it is remarkable that the Welsh language has held its ground through two invasions, and at the same time has borrowed a large number of Latin words. It is not strange, then, if Keltic languages should be found to have something in common with all with which they were at any time brought into close connection.

It cannot be doubted that the Cimbri, whom Marius overthrew at Aquæ Sextiæ, were Kelts. They gave their name to the Cimbric Chersonese—i.e., Denmark. We have the name now a little changed in Cumberland, where, only three hundred years ago, the people spoke a Keltic dialect. One of the British tribes was called the Brigantes, and at the east end of Lake Constance was a town called Brigantia, now Bregentz. Indeed, the Tyrolean valleys

contain many Keltic names. So does the north of Italy, once called Cisalpinga. Some have thought that the Etrurians were Keltic; and if it is true that they descended from the Rætian Alps, this is probably so.* The language of the common people in the Grisons, the South Tyrol, and Piedmont, is very similar, and contains much Keltic mixed with Latin.

Period IV.—We may *perhaps* make a distinct period of the appearance of the Lithuanians on the European stage. There is not much evidence of their having spread very widely towards the west, but there is no doubt that they once dwelt in most of what is now Prussia. The so-called Old Prussian was a Lithuanian dialect, and there seem to be traces of it farther south. Lithuania was a notable country in the middle ages, and Chaucer tells us of a traveller that—

“In Lettowe had he reysed and in Ruce.”

In 1389 Lithuania was united to Poland; and when, at the first partition of Poland, Russia seized on Lithuania, she claimed that it had all along been rightfully a Russian province. The Lithuanian tongue is, however, very distinct from Russian, and is of great importance to philologists. It was of some incautious traveller who had spoken of the “parvenu Lithuanians” that the late Lord Strangford said “he deserved to be plunged up to the neck in a Lithuanian bog, in company with the last European bison, the last spoken verb in -mi, and perhaps the last patriot.”

Period V. The Teutons.—This should probably be divided into two, the immigration of the so-called Low and High Germans. The former name is not a happy one, for it supposes that the Low Germans inhabited solely the flat or low lands in the north. But it is doubtful whether the Goths, who dwelt far south, are not rather to be recognised as Low than High German. Among all the numerous names of tribes given by the later Roman writers, we may observe three main divisions. These are the Saxons or North Low Germans, the Suevi or High Germans, and the Goths. The English now chiefly represent the Old Saxons. The modern Germans stand for the Suevi. The Goths are well-nigh lost, absorbed in the many countries they conquered at the fall of the Roman Empire.

* Donaldson thought them Scandinavian, and Lord Crawford High German.

There is Gothic blood in France, Spain, and Italy; and to this extent it may be doubted whether we English have not a nearer relationship with what are called the Latin races than with the Germans proper.

No people ever entered Europe who influenced her destinies so greatly as did the Teutons, taking the word in its widest sense. All the great powers of modern Europe have been shaped by them. Look where we will, we see their handiwork. In the centre are two German empires. North Italy was modified by the Germanic Lombards. The French monarchy was founded by the German Clovis. It was a Gothic power which drove back the Moors in Spain, and rendered Castile famous in both hemispheres. Queen Victoria can trace her descent from the Saxon Egbert. Norway, Sweden, and Denmark are so Teutonic, that the late Baron Bunsen is reported to have said that he never saw a real German till he visited Denmark, whose inhabitants appeared to him less mixed than those of his own land. The Russian derives his name from Ross, a Swedish tribe who founded the first Tsarate. Two Varangian—that is to say, Swedish—heroes are said to have founded Kief, the “Holy City” of Russia.

Period VI. The Slavonian. — Possibly this may have been earlier; but if so we should expect more traces of Slavonian presence westward. A very remarkable people are the Slaves. If we are to believe some of themselves, the great Eastern monarchs, whose capital was Babylon, were of their race. In Nebuchadnezzar, or Nabuchodonosar, they see the modern Polish words, Na bogh edno Tsar—that is, “There is no God but the King;” and in Belshazzar, Bieala Tsar, the White King. It certainly is remarkable that archæologists are doubtful as to who the Babylonians were, and to what class their language* is to be referred. Not having addicted myself to the deciphering of Cuneiform inscriptions, I will not pretend to guess. In Europe, however, we know the Slavonians as a race who have wandered hither and thither, and split up into numerous divisions, speaking numerous languages, all of which are not pleasant to us to look upon, and still worse to pronounce. They have never furnished any pure Slavonian people which has made

* This is meant of one only of the languages found in these inscriptions.

any very great figure for long, though there were times when the Poles did yeoman service to Christendom against the advancing flood of Mussulman invasion. As for Russia, we look upon her as too much mixed up with Finnish and Mongol elements to be called a truly Slavonian people. "Scratch the Russian and you will find the Tartar." The other Slavonian peoples are individually small and scattered. But collectively they form a large proportion of the population of Europe, and hold much of the land.[†] Could they possibly be united, and assert their position against those who now dominate over them, Messrs. Keith Johnsons' map of Europe would have to be entirely remade.

The above are national changes which may be conceived to have passed over the face of Europe, possibly—though not at all certainly—in the above order. We pass on to the *political* changes. These are to be distinguished from national ones, as they proceed from States rather than from races. They are the fruits of wars, and royal intermarriages, and treaties, and the ambition of statesmen, and diplomatic intrigue. We may content ourselves with a hasty sketch of them; though, perhaps, they interest many more of us than does the somewhat vague retrospect which we are able to take of national changes. But these political changes are always going on. We are old enough, all of us, to remember some of them. We heard of others in our earliest reading-books. They were set forth with all the pomp and circumstance of war, or shone with the glitter of civil ceremonial. Hence, they are more familiar to us than those more silent changes which are well-nigh hidden from us by the veil of antiquity, but which have, perhaps, still more tended to make Europe what she is. We know, most of us, what were the boundaries of the great Roman Empire, what States sprang up on its fall, the dominions of Charlemagne, and something of the vicissitudes of the Holy Roman—less correctly known as the German—Empire. If we are ignorant of these things, at least we pretend not to be so; and, at worst, excuse ourselves by the plea that history was not much taught in the days of our youth. We know, at least, how Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were

united; how Sweden effected her independence, and Norway was eventually joined with her; and how she lost Finland to Russia, and how the latter in three bites gobbled up Poland; how Greece achieved an independence to which she has done little credit; how the Dukes of Savoy parted with their ancient patrimony to France, and choosing the sunny side of the Alps, became the Royal house of united Italy; how the combination of Wallachians and Bulgarians made a new country—Roumania; how the Zollverein, which we remember at the first Exhibition, proved the germ of a new German Empire, which has appropriated two of France's richest provinces; how those pretty pink and green border lines which divide the countries of Europe in maps have gone marching about even in our own day. "What is the use of my learning geography," a young Imperial Highness was reported to have said, "when my father keeps changing it all?" That father will make no more changes in the map of Europe; but no doubt some one else will take his place in so doing.

Will Europe in fifty years be Cossack or Republican?—either, or both, or neither? There was great fear once among some that Russia would overpower all Europe. Just now any such plans on her part seem to be in abeyance, and all her energies bent on Asiatic conquest. On the other hand, there is much tending towards the second alternative. Perhaps at this very moment the "Committee of the United States of Europe" is sitting in London. But there is a great deal of tough work to be done before the then American President shall flash along the wires a message of congratulation to the first European President. On the whole, the present writer would offer odds against the scheme being realized any time within the next hundred years, if he could arrange with any enthusiastic Republican for a settlement between their respective representatives. Perhaps the Spiritualist could manage the business when the settling-day came. And let him not be thought to express this scepticism out of any disrespect for Republican principles in the abstract—far from it. De Tocqueville did not believe that America could long hold together. In the interests of our Transatlantic cousins, we hope it will. But in Europe there are too many conflicting interests and well-established national traditions to allow

[†] Estimated at one-third of the population and half the land.

of a general amalgamation of States. Be the physical features of Europe what they may in one, two, or three thousand years; let half the south of Europe have been swallowed up by volcanoes and earthquakes; let the Baltic have dried up, the Welsh coast have advanced until it has joined the Irish, and the Atlantic be some hundred miles narrower; let the most violent changes imaginable have passed over the face of nature—we may be sure the general political aspect will not have materially changed. The atlases—if there are any—will still show political divisions; and these, as now, will rarely coincide with the natural boundaries.

MEMORIES.

ONCE wand'ring 'mong the autumn woods,
While brown leaves fell and fell,
New hopes kept budding in my breast,
Sweeter than lips could tell.

Beside me walked the one I loved,
His strong hand grasping mine,
His soft words falling on my ear
In accents half divine.

Oh, autumn woods! oh, autumn leaves!
Blush red beneath the sun,
For him who made a hundred vows,
And broke them ev'ry one.

What anguish for the bosom, when
The heart cannot condemn!
When the old affection lingers,
Like leaves about the stem!

Would that the little budding hopes
With which my life was crowned,
Like leaves and flowers, could spring again
Whene'er the spring comes round.

Oh, faded woods! oh, faded flowers!
Your youth will come once more;
But I must pine amid the blasts,
All withered to the core.

Oh, love of mine, come back to me,
And underneath those boughs,
Speak one kind word, and I'll forgive
Thy hundred broken vows!

MARY M. MILLAR.

DOGHERTY'S COURTSHIP.

A RUSTIC SKETCH.—IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Dick had run about half a mile down the road, which he did in a much shorter space of time than he had ever done that distance before, it struck him that, all things considered, it might be

no harm to stop and walk—which he accordingly did, occasionally looking behind him as if half in fear of Nannie's father coming after him with the beetle or some other equally formidable weapon. The beetle and Nannie's father, however, were not forthcoming, and he was allowed to wander home in peace.

"Well, the like o' that bit o' business hasn't come across me this month o' Sundays. May I niver ate mate, but I think I have wrecked the owl hen-house clean out o' a face, and near broke the en' o' my back as well. There'll be a rale tift about it as sure as there's a neb on a hern-crane—a downright regular cathegully. I wondher how Nannie'll get aff. Jewillikins and his Dinah, I hope the owl boy'll not touch her. I'll have to 'go back soon, and hear how they got things squared up."

Such and such-like were Dick's reflections as he sauntered home, where he shortly arrived in safety, and retired to rest. Oh, what a night was that! Not an eye did he close till near morning; and, when sleep at length did visit him, his mind as before was filled with dreams, this time of a dreadful nature.

He thought he saw hens, ducks, and turkeys flying wildly round him, and cackling, quacking, hissing, and gobbling like so many imps of darkness that had assumed that shape. Then he thought he saw Nannie's father flailing her with the pitchfork shaft, and that she was crying to him for help, but that he could render her none on account of being himself up to the neck in a mud-bank at that particular time. Then he thought he was falling over a precipice, and that when he reached the bottom he was so badly hurt that he just lay there, telling himself he was killed.

Again, he thought that he and Nannie's father were fighting, and that her father threw half a brick at him, and that the deadly missile took effect on his nose, completely doing away with that useful organ, and knocking two teeth down his throat. Every scene in the strange panorama of his dreams was becoming worse than the last, till at length he awoke at twenty-five minutes to five o'clock, bewildered and unrefreshed, and vowed that he would go to see Nannie that very night, and satisfy himself that all was well.

We need not follow him through his moods and mistakes of that day. Suffice it

to say that the only thought in his head was Nannie; and Wellington, at the crisis of the Waterloo struggle, never longed for night or Blucher as earnestly and impatiently as Dick Dogherty longed for night and Nannie throughout that day.

As soon as the dusk of twilight began to steal over the earth, Dick quitted his labour in the field and went to prepare his toilet, and take, or pretend to take, some supper, previous to starting once more to behold the being whose presence was now to him what a leg of mutton is to a policeman—yea, more.

Shortly after six o'clock Dick was approaching Nannie's residence.

He had this time determined, let the old fellow say what he might, to go in boldly, and sit down as if his coming was quite a matter of course.

When he approached the door he began to feel a little nervous; but, with a great effort, he conquered this backwardness, and rapped gently with his knuckles.

A pause was heard on the floor, and in another moment Nannie's sister confronted him.

"Why, Dick, is this you? Come in—come in."

"Yes, it's all that's left of me now. How are ye all gettin' on here?"

"Well, 'deed, we daren't complain, thank ye. How is all your people?"

"Well, purty much as usual."

"Mamma, here's Dick Dogherty. It's a queer long time since he was here, isn't it?"

The customary greeting was exchanged with "the missis," and then was dropped the sentence that made Dick's heart turn heavy as a stone.

"There's not one in the house, Dick, but me and mamma. Father and Nannie and the boys are all gone to meetin' just about half an hour ago. But we expect them back at nine."

When he heard this he assumed a careless air, and replied "Jist so;" and immediately entered into a conversation with the two about the weather, the crops, cows, horses, pigs, and other farming affairs, which lasted for about an hour and a half, before he had decided what course to pursue. A thought then struck him, however, which he at once resolved to carry into execution. He would go up the road, and meet Nannie and the rest coming from meeting, and arrange with her to let him in after her father

had gone to bed. With this idea he rose from his chair by the fire, saying—

"Well, I think I'll have to make a shape out of this."

"There's the clock just beginning to strike this minute," returned Mary. "But sure, you might rest yerself a bit, Dick—it's not often you're here. Sure, you could wait till they come in, couldn't you?"

"Aw, well, thank ye—I think I'll take a dandher up the road, and see if I can meet them."

"Ay, well, ye could do that. Ye'll meet them about the Loam Ends or somewhere there. Jist wait a minute, an' I'll go up the road a step or two with you. Mother, will you mind that bread for two or three minutes?"

"Yis, dear."

And Dick and Mary went out, and wandered leisurely up the road.

"Sure, Dick," said Mary, as they sauntered along, "we had the greatest scene here last night that ever you heard tell of. The owl fellow was in the biggest passion iver I seen him in. Some thief had been tryin' to get into the hen-house to steal the fowl, and the roof give way with him, and he went crashin' down through it, and brought nearly the whole place along with him. The fowls went flutterin' and flappin' and shoutin' in all directions, so that you would a-heard them half a mile away, for the very devil was scared out o' them; and when the owl fellow went out, sich a rumpus you niver seen or heard of. He saw somebody runnin' down the road, and he afther them, like a redshank; but not a bit of him could run the one side of whoever it was, and he come back cursin' and swearin' like a trooper. Afther two hours searchin' about in the dark, with the lantern, we got in about half o' the fowls; but we got them all but one o' the chickens and a hen the next mornin', and they'll maybe turn up yet, too. The owl boy has been in a bad temper iver since."

"Why, Mary, ye astonish me!" said Dick, assuming an air of wonder. "An' it was last night, ye say, all this happened? By the powers o' broth, I'll have to watch *our* hen-coop if there's a wheen o' them boys about."

"Indeed, you had better, Dick, for they might go to you nixt. Tell me, Dick," she added, after a few moments' hesitation, "do you want to see Nannie the night?"

Dick turned a little red in the face at the pointedness of this question, and stammered—

"Well, not particularly; but—a—well, I—a—I would like to see her, too, if it would be no harm."

"Well, I can manage it for you, if you'll let me, Dick. Don't let the owl fellow see you at all; but come back to the house at nine, and I'll tell Nannie that you're comin'."

"An' what time does the old villain go to bed?" inquired Dick, eagerly.

"Oh, he's niver much later than nine. I'm sure he'll go to bed the night as soon as he comes in, for the walk will have tired him. When you come to the door, watch that none of the neighbour boys sees, for you know the tricks they sometimes play."

"All right, then, I'll come at nine."

"Come at nine, and if the owl couple isn't to bed, either Nannie or I'll come out and give you the signal. And now, Dick, I'll turn, for fear the owl woman lets the bread burn. You'll not have more than three-quarters of an hour to wait."

"All right—go ahead, an' I'll come roun' about nine, or five minutes past."

And with this, Dick and Mary separated.

At about five minutes past nine Dick was to be observed prowling stealthily round the house towards the door. At the same hour, two young men, who were evidently up to mischief, were to be observed prowling just as stealthily at the back of a hedge a short distance from the house, watching narrowly Dick's every movement.

Alas, Dick, in his eagerness and confusion, had forgotten to attend to Mary's advice, and woeful were the consequences, as the reader will soon see. When stealing round the house, he noticed a light in the old people's bed-room; and, seeing this, he went boldly up to the door, and knocked gently. Nannie herself opened, and, with her finger up, cautiously beckoned him to come in.

"Are they in bed?" whispered Dick to her in the passage.

"Yes," was the reply, also in a whisper; "but they are only gone about ten minutes. We'll have to keep as quiet as mice for a little while, till they both begin to snore, and then we needn't care so much."

With this Nannie stirred the fire, and put on a few extra pieces of turf.

"Come forward, Dick, and don't be sit-

ting away out there in the cold; come forward to the fire. Here's a chair for you."

"All right," whispered Dick as he took the proffered chair. "Now, I want you to tell me how that affair blew over last night. He didn't say anything to you, sure?"

"Oh, no—he never suspected any of my friends at all. He thought it was thieves. But were you hurt, Dick? I was awfully uneasy, for I thought you might have got your back broke or something."

"Oh, not a bit the worse was I. Mary tells me there hasn't been much harm done among the fowls."

"No, we only lost the speckled hen and one of the chickens."

Chatting thus in whispers, they passed the time, till at last the loud snores of the old man, followed by those of the old lady herself, unburdened them of their restraint, and then Dick began to feel that something more must be done than talking.

Accordingly he drew up his chair close to Nannie's, and, laying his left arm along the back of hers, took her hand in his. For a little while she objected to this arrangement; but gradually she gave way to it, and sat at rest. Then Dick took some kind of weakness in the left arm that was on the back of the chair, which caused it to fall round Nannie's neck, and at the same time he pressed the little hand, and said, softly,

"Nannie, dear, I wouldn't want ye fur the world. I've been dhramin' about ye night and day since I saw ye. Ye might give us a kiss."

"For shame, Dick—I wonder you haven't more sense. I thought you were very quiet, and I see you're just as bad as any of them."

"Ach, Nannie, dear, in sowl, I can't help it. I like ye that much that I could kiss ye for iver. Sure, that wee mouth of yours would turn any poor devil's head. Give us a kiss, like a dacent girl."

"Indeed, I'm sure I'll not do anything of the kind. I wonder you could be so impudent as to ask it."

"Ach, now, Nannie, sure there's no harm in a bit of a kiss. Sure you might do that much for us. I'll jist ask one wee one—sure that's no harm."

Nannie replied by smiling one of those sweet smiles of hers in his face, which was quite as much as to say—

"Take it, you gossoon."

Dick pulled her towards him, put his left

arm round under her chin, and gave her a kiss that was almost loud enough to wake the old pair.

TOLD ROUND A NEW ZEALAND CAMP FIRE.—XIII.

IN the afternoon of the next day, Charlie Stevens returned, and told us he had sold the cattle, and was to give delivery of them at once. He had sold them well, and we were all very pleased at his success, and glad that our driving job was over—Bill and Pat in particular, as Charlie told them there was a ship going to sail from Lyttelton for Callao in a few days, and so there was nothing now to detain them. From Callao they would easily get by steamer to Panama, where they would have to wait until Bill's mates came in the *Vesper*, for stores, &c.

It was our last evening together, so we were determined to make it as jolly as possible. Charlie was well cross-questioned about all the Christchurch news. Who was going to be married? What horse was likely to win the Canterbury Cup? And what was the English news?

"As for the English news, I have brought a *Home News*, which you can study at your leisure," said Charlie, "and so save me a power of talking. The big race for the Champion will be a good one, I expect. A good many horses are spoken of as likely; but I prefer old Ladybird's chance before anything I know of. How did you get on last night? Did you have a yarn from any of you?"

"Yes," I replied. "In your absence I was made substitute; so I told them poor Old George's tale, just as he told it to you and I that night we had to watch the sheep at the Splitters' Hut, long, long ago."

"But you have a chance to-night, Charlie. We don't wish to deprive you of the pleasure of twisting a yarn," put in Pat with a grin; "and you can just begin as soon as you like. You said you would tell us about Philip Clifford, the bushranger; and I for one would like to hear what he had to say for himself. To tell you the truth, I cannot understand how an educated gentleman, as you describe him to have been, could ever fall so low as to take to thieving, and very likely murder, for a livelihood."

"Well, if you wish it, I will try to give

you his story; but remember, I don't vouch for its truth in any way," replied Stevens; "and, if I forget or repeat anything, just think how long it is since I heard it, and make due allowance. The tale will lose much of its interest when not told by the man himself; but I will do my best to use, as nearly as possible, his own words."

I told you that I had met him at an hotel in Bendigo about two years ago. It was just before I came down here; and I had gone from Melbourne to Bendigo to see about some shares I had in a mine there. It is a different style of travelling there now, to what it was in our young days, Harry; now, you leave Melbourne after having had a comfortable breakfast at the Club, and get to Bendigo in plenty of time to transact an hour or two's business and return at night. Railways, although they destroy the romance of bush life, add greatly to comfort and convenience. Before the railway was made, a journey to Bendigo or any of the digging towns was a serious undertaking in winter, even on horseback; for the roads, after getting some distance out of Melbourne, were past description. Every now and then the traveller would come to a boggy piece of flat ground full of quagmires, regular Sloughs of Despond, into which, unless cautious, his horse would sink up to the girths, and, after splashing him carefully over with black mud, would flounder out, to repeat the performance after going a few yards farther on. Drays had the greatest difficulty in taking stores up country; and the rates for carriage—I speak of the year 1853—were enormous, once as high as £120 per ton for flour. It was only by two or three teams travelling in company that they contrived to get along at all. When they got to one of those low, boggy flats I mentioned, the bullocks were taken out of all the drays except one; to this the whole lot were chained, and then "double" or "treble bauked," with sixteen or perhaps twenty-four bullocks in a string; the dray was forced through the thick mud, with a great deal of shouting, cracking of whips, and the usual amount of swearing. In this way the journey was slow and tedious; often not more than half a mile was gained after a severe day's toil. No wonder that carriage was expensive. In summer it was not so bad, for the ground was baked as hard as flint by the heat of the sun; but even then it was bad enough with dust and

heat. The worst part of the road was the Kilmore Hill, or "Pretty Sally's Pinch," as it was generally called by the bullock drivers, in honour of a fair creature who kept a small grog shop on the top of the hill. But all this has nothing to do with my yarn.

When I had finished my business in Bendigo, I went to the Shamrock Hotel, intending to get dinner and return to Melbourne. A tall, handsome man, with long beard and moustaches, was sitting at the table when I took my place. Something in his face seemed familiar to me; but I could not recall to my memory when or where I had seen him before. He seemed to eye me when I sat down as if he too had before met me, and after we had been talking together for some little time, he asked me if I had ever been digging at M'Ivor. I told him I had been there soon after it "broke out," and he said he had been there also, and added—

"I thought I knew your face. Your name is Stevens, is it not?"

"Yes," I replied; "but I do not remember you, although I fancy I have seen you before."

"I remember," he said, taking no notice of my remark, "the row about your claim, and how nearly you lost your gold. You took the claim those rascals the bushrangers left—did you not?"

"Yes, we did," I said; "and it turned out well, too—better than our original one."

Then I told him about my meeting Clifford, and how he had given me the hint to work it.

"And what has become of your eldest brother?" he inquired. "Harry, I think, was his name."

"He is living on the Murray, not far from Moama, and has a first-rate station there. But how is it you know his name so well?" I asked.

He was just going to say something, when all at once I recognized him. It was Clifford.

"Clifford!" I cried, jumping up. "By Jove, I thought it was some one I knew; but your great long beard bothered me."

"Yes," he said quietly, and not moving, "that was my name when you knew me six years ago. But please call me Clinton now, as that is the name I am now known by, and I have no wish to be recognized as the notorious Clifford by any of the police who may yet remember him."

I need not repeat all our conversation, as it would not interest you. I found him as pleasant as in former days; and I agreed to remain the night at Bendigo, on condition that he told me his history. This, nothing loath, he promised to do; and accordingly, in the evening, over our grog, he began in the following manner:—

PHILIP CLIFFORD: THE BUSHRANGER'S STORY.

I am the son of a clergyman who has a small but comfortable living in one of the midland counties of England. I was sent to Cambridge after leaving school, as my father wished me to go into the Church. Although my father was far from being a rich man, he contrived to give me a tolerable allowance when there, and I was therefore able to do as the other men did. But this did not content me, and I soon got into debt by giving large and frequent "wines," and by playing at cards and betting. Still, I managed to float along, although sometimes nearly high and dry. Now and then—not often, though—the horse I backed won, and I got enough to set me straight for a time; but in a few weeks I was in as great a mess as ever. What with one amusement and another, I had little time to devote to study, and the natural consequence was that, although I was able to pass, I did so in such a very shady manner that my father—who, with a parent's usual pride, had expected me to come out high—was sadly disappointed and angry, and cut down my yearly allowance from £300 to £150. He certainly paid off all my college debts, but I owed a considerable sum besides to some of the betting fraternity, who were constantly dunning me for money. I had to keep staving them off, from month to month, with fair promises; but this could not last much longer, and I was at my wits' end to know how I was to get sufficient to pay them.

My only hope was, that I would be lucky enough to win over the Derby, for which I had backed a horse heavily. This, however, failed me; and after seeing Flying Dutchman win the race, whilst the horse I had put my trust in was far behind, I turned, and left Epsom Downs a beggar, ruined in money and credit. I was now utterly without means of subsistence, and owed a sum of money so large that nothing but a miracle would ever enable me to clear

myself. As for appealing to my father a second time, that was out of the question. I saw nothing for it but just to clear out of England, and wait until the storm blew over. It was at this time, when afraid to show my face, that I met a man who has since had so great an influence over my past life. This man, whose real name I will not mention, and will therefore call Smith, I had seen often at race meetings and in gambling houses; but I had never known anything about him, and had purposely avoided him, not liking his appearance. He now seemed to seek me out, and was evidently anxious to make friends with me. That he had some hidden motive for this I was well aware; but in my position I was glad to have some one whom I could talk openly to, and told him exactly how I was fixed. He offered me money to go on with; but, as I had still enough for present necessities, I declined taking any. At the same time I felt grateful to him for offering it, and I began gradually to overcome my dislike to him. I little suspected what a ruinous trap he had laid for me.

One evening he began to talk about imitating people's writing; and taking a pen, showed how easily he could do so. He wrote a name down, and asked me to copy it; and, not thinking anything about it, I set to work, and, being a first-rate penman, I soon was able to copy it so exactly that he said he could not tell one from the other, and added that he did not believe I could say which was the original myself. To try me, he said he would take two slips of paper, one with a name written by him, and the other with the name copied on it by me. Like a fool, flattered by his admiration, I agreed, and wrote the name carefully down, little thinking to what purpose it would be put. Some days after this happened, I was startled by reading in one of the papers that a forgery had been discovered, and that the forged name was the very one which I had imitated. Of course I hurried off to find Smith, and ask him what it meant.

"Means," he said, with a look of surprise; "why, what does it mean but that you have made a mistake, and written another man's name on a cheque instead of your own?"

In vain I protested against the accusation. He either did not or would not believe me, and strongly advised me to bolt. At last, terrified by the prospect of being caught and convicted of forgery, I consented; and

succeeded in getting a passage in a ship bound for Sydney.

You may guess my surprise when I found my *friend* Smith in the ship, a passenger like myself. Then, for the first time, I began to suspect the truth—namely, that he had used the slip of paper on which I had written the name for his own benefit; but there was no means of finding out the truth, and when I accused him of it, he got very angry, and threatened to inform on me if I ever said another word about it. Somehow, he had gained so much influence over me that I was afraid to say another word about it.

For two years I wandered about the bush in Australia, getting odd jobs at the different stations, but never staying long in one place. Then rumours of gold having been found began to be circulated, and soon the rumours became certainty. I, like most people, caught the prevailing infection, and soon found myself at Summerhill Creek, where I remained for some weeks, doing well. From there I went to Ballarat, going by sea to Melbourne. My luck failed me there, and I was soon in a state of want, and had to take a day's work now and then to earn food for the remainder of the week: all this time living amongst roughs of the lowest description, whose pride consisted in trying how each could excel the other in wickedness. I was becoming habituated to crime, and less fearful of offending against the laws. It seems to me now as if some sort of spell was over me at that time, as if I had become possessed of a devil; and I rejoiced in all sorts of evil, except drinking—that was a vice I never had any love for.

Soon after I went to Ballarat I met Smith, who had gone there to establish a store. He appeared glad to see me again, and asked me how I was doing, and questioned me closely about my life since I had been in the colony. I told him all I had done; and he hinted he could put me up to a better paying business than digging. It was some time before he spoke plainly, but at last the truth came out. He was in league with a gang of bushrangers, and wished me to join them. At first I treated his suggestion with anger and disdain; but by degrees the idea became less objectionable, and I gradually began to listen to his persuasions, until at last I consented to take command of a small gang.

I cannot offer any excuses for myself, nor can I now understand how I was persuaded

to do what I have done. Smith insisted that there was no more harm in taking people's money in an open, manly manner, than in robbing them in an underhand way, as the storekeepers and others on the diggings did. The argument, however, which really determined me was his threat of exposing my "forgery" if I refused to join him. It was weak and cowardly of me; but fear that my father should hear of it, and that it might bring disgrace on him, urged me; and to escape conviction of an offence which I had not knowingly committed, I agreed to become a thief and a robber. Smith was to keep his store at Ballarat, and act as our "fence," taking his share of the plunder for the risk he ran. The only stipulation I made was that no blood was to be shed, and to this the members of my gang agreed.

The life we led was full of a wild sort of romance and danger, which pleased me, and I began to like it. Our band became greatly feared, on account of the daring manner in which we entered tents, under the very noses of the police, and robbed the occupants. I had great difficulty in keeping the brutal wretches under me in order, and very nearly lost my own life in rescuing some of our unfortunate victims from murder.

On one occasion, I had gone to Kilmore—it was after we had left Ballarat, and gone to Bendigo—and was to meet the rest of the gang at a certain spot in the Black Forest. When I got near the meeting place, I thought I heard faint cries for help; and turning out of the road, after going some twenty or thirty yards, I saw a man sitting on a horse's back, underneath a tree. I rode up to him, intending to ask him if he, too, had heard any cries; but, to my surprise, as I got close to him, his horse—seeing mine, I suppose—moved slowly forward, leaving the unfortunate rider suspended in the air. Naturally thinking the man was trying to commit suicide, I jumped off my horse, and running to him, cut him down. He was not much the worse for his suspension, and in a few moments was able to tell me all about it. It seems that three men had met him, and "stuck him up." After taking the little money he had from him, one of them proposed that they should have a "lark," as they called it, with him; and suggested that he should be put on his horse's back, with his hands tied behind him, and a rope round his neck, with the other end made

fast to the limb of a tree over his head, so that when his horse got tired of standing still, and walked away, he would be left dangling, and be strangled to death. The notion seemed to please them vastly, and they began to carry it out at once. In a few minutes he was bound and put on his saddle; and then the wretches, laughing and joking at him, left him to his terrible fate. He had been there nearly an hour when I found him, every moment expecting his horse to move on, and afraid to shout loudly lest he startled him. Several times he heard people passing along the road, but had failed to attract their attention; and he had nearly lost his senses with anxiety and terror. He was, naturally enough, very grateful to me, and pressed me to visit him. Then, I could not; but since I have often stayed with him, and he is one of my greatest friends now, although he little suspects how much I had to do with the affair. When I told the gang what I had done, they were very angry; and it was only my threatening to leave them altogether that quieted them. You see, they had been very lucky ever since I had joined them, and were afraid of losing me, probably supposing I should form another gang in opposition to theirs. Another time I came just in time to save the life of an unfortunate digger who had been robbed by our gang. This poor fellow had offered some resistance, and had hit one of our own men over the head with the butt-end of his revolver. This man—it was Angus, whom I have no doubt you remember—who was the most savage, brutal villain of the lot, and was in a fierce state of anger, determined to have revenge for the pain he suffered, and proposed that the wretched digger should be tied to a tree and burnt alive. The idea of torturing a fellow-creature, and watching his sufferings, seemed to please them immensely; and he was soon bound fast to a small gum tree, whilst dry branches of trees were collected, and placed in a ring round him. His piteous entreaties were unheeded, and only called forth loud shouts of diabolical laughter; and just as I came up to the spot, they began to set fire to the heap of wood. I was only just in time; five minutes longer, and it would have been too late. I saw at once what it all meant; and, galloping up on my horse, I drew my revolver, and ordered Angus instantly to unbind the miserable, half-dead man; telling him that if he hesitated an instant, I would send a bullet

into his brain. For a moment he appeared to think of resisting, but something in my face told him I was in earnest, and would not be trifled with, and he slowly and sulkily unbound him. Ever after that, Angus and I were enemies, and I have reason to believe he tried to deliver me up to the police on more than one occasion; and nothing but his fear of implicating himself in doing so, saved me. I could tell you many more such stories, but time presses.

The most daring robbery we committed, and the one in which we were most successful, was the robbing of a gold ship in Hobson's Bay. This we managed so securely, that we were able to take all the gold away, and sold it through Smith without the police being able to get the slightest trace of us. The plan we adopted was very simple. We got some policemen's clothes, and went on board a little time before the night guard of police (there was a guard kept every night after gold went on board), and getting them into the cabin singly, secured them without either noise or trouble. We had then the whole night to get the gold ashore, and decamp. You must remember, at that time there were very few sailors in the ships when lying at anchor in the Bay, so that we met with little or no resistance from them.

It was not our gang that robbed the M'Ivor escort, although, after our attempt on your claim, we got the credit of it. But I believe the man who was found murdered at M'Ivor when you were there was stabbed by Angus; I never could find out for certain, but I have strong reasons for thinking so; and it was this foul murder which first made me think of giving up the dreadful life I was leading. As I told you, I tried to prevent the robbery of your claim, but without success.

Whether I would ever have had the courage to oppose Smith and assert my own innocence is very doubtful; but, fortunately for me, an accident happened to him which rendered it unnecessary. He was riding home late one night, much the worse for drink, and fell off, breaking his thigh and injuring his head so seriously that his life was despaired of. Then, frightened at his approaching end, he sent for me and confessed the truth: how he had used the imitated signature for his own purpose, and had obtained a considerable sum of money by it, and, fearing the truth might be discovered, had left the country. Of course I

got his confession properly drawn up and witnessed.

Three years ago my father died and left me his property, which was more than I had thought; but not very much. Since then, however, I have come into a very large fortune by the death of a relative that I had never seen in my life. I had to change my name to Clinton to obtain it—a change I made with pleasure. I returned to England, and stayed there over a year. I am now engaged in trying to find out those people who were robbed by our gang during the time I was one of them, in order to make some sort of return to them. So far, I have succeeded beyond my hopes; but I fear it will be out of my power ever to make amends for the evil deeds I committed when I led that wild, wicked life as leader of the Black Forest Gang.

Owing to my wearing this large beard, no one until to-day has ever recognized in Frank Clinton the daring, impudent bush-ranger, Philip Clifford.

"Well," said Pat, when Stevens ceased speaking, "it is a strange, improbable tale, and I for one cannot imagine how a man with his sort of ideas, and the feelings he describes himself as having, could allow himself to be, as it were, forced into crime by an empty threat."

"That is what I said to him," replied Charlie; "and his reply was that he feared the effects the exposure might produce on his father, and not for himself. For my own part, I have every faith in him; and his conduct in trying to return the money taken by the gang proves that I am justified in doing so, I think. He seemed very repentant, and was most anxious to do all in his power to return anything taken by himself or his gang. It was difficult to manage without detection; but he was fortunate in finding many of his former victims, and in being able to repay them, without raising any suspicions of his being the person from whom the money came, although he always sent a few lines with the money, telling how and why it was paid."

The following day, we were employed in delivering the cattle over to the purchaser; and in the afternoon we left for Christchurch, there to remain a few days, and see Pat and Bill safely started off for Callao, on their (what certainly appeared to us) wild-goose chase. We had a long, weary, irksome ride;

and, tired with a hard day's work, rode slowly forward, saying little to one another, each thinking over the past, and perhaps speculating dreamily on the future. In a few days we would be far apart—Bill and Pat tossing about on the restless, heaving ocean, as they slowly ploughed their tedious way over the broad Pacific; Charlie and I returning to the quiet monotony of station life, journeying over the hot, unsheltered, dreary plains of Canterbury. Would we ever all meet together again? And if so, when and where? Perhaps the same tastes, the same feelings, an equal love for a free, unfettered life, would lead us to seek the same scenes; and in future years, it might be in other climes, we would all once more meet together, there again to renew the old friendly companionship which gave such pleasure to each, and softened the many hardships of a rough life, whilst beguiling the tediousness of many a long hour spent round a New Zealand camp fire.

CHEAP SENSATION.

THE condition of contemporary literature is always a subject of considerable importance. It is often said that "a man is known by his friends;" and if this is true of his outward associates, still more is it true of his mental companions—of the writers whom he selects to amuse his leisure with their fancies, or help him with their sober thought. The supply of books, as of other commodities, is regulated by the demand, and their prevailing character is a fair index of a corresponding tendency in the minds of those who purchase and read them. Conversely, few things that a man reads are without an effect of some kind upon him, and any particular class of books tends to create an audience which will demand more of the same description.

Every week there are issued in London a large number of cheap magazines, patronized chiefly by the industrial classes, and possessing very distinctive characteristics. They consist, for the most part, of works of fiction, with here and there a brief article on some topic of current interest, and perhaps a few verses. Some of these publications offer, for the sum of one penny, instalments of three or four, sometimes of as many as six or seven, different novels, besides short tales which are completed in a single number, all being copiously illus-

trated. Even for a halfpenny, one may procure nearly as much variety. Then, besides these magazines, there are a host of pamphlets, each containing one or more complete stories, and professing to form part of a "library of fiction," or something of the kind.

Most persons are aware of the existence of these prints, but comparatively few of the upper and middle classes know the nature of their contents. The laughable stories that are told about them are generally regarded as exaggerations—as, for example, that an author was dismissed from the staff of one of the magazines because he would continually put more than three murders in a chapter, which was the editor's limit. In reality, however, it would be hard to exaggerate the tremendous character of the incidents employed. Battle, murder, and sudden death are treated as ordinary occurrences. The plot usually turns upon the conflicting attractions of rival beauties, resulting in the suicide of the rejected one; or upon the administration of poison in mistake for medicine; or upon a countess having committed bigamy, and the consequent complications respecting the succession to the earldom and estates; or something equally original and startling. Wholesale catastrophes are very much in vogue, such as the explosion of a powder mill, or the drowning of a party of skaters by the breaking up of the ice. Some time ago, the author of one of these tales, who evidently wrote it—as it was published—by instalments, caused great excitement by the reckless manner in which he introduced fresh characters from time to time. In nearly every chapter, new personages made their appearance, till at length the interest of the story entirely centred in speculation as to what on earth the author would do with them all. It was obvious that he could not marry more than three or four couples at the outside, nor murder more than say half a dozen individuals. Expectation reached its height when the author—probably himself in a frantic state—put the whole of his *dramatis personæ* on board a steamer, and sent them down the Thames for a pleasure trip. On the way the boiler burst, and all were killed, with the exception of two or three, who were married in due course, and lived happily ever afterwards.

But the prevailing theme of these publications is invariably love—sometimes ho-

nourable, frequently illicit. It is seldom that a chapter is allowed to pass without some allusion to the personal appearance of the heroes and heroines—who, however, seem to resemble each other in a marked degree. The former usually have “dark curls, clustering over their white foreheads;” the latter possess “coral lips,” “violet eyes” (this colour is *de rigueur*), “arms of alabaster,” and a “delicate creamy skin.” Is it to be wondered at that the proposals are numerous? The young men are continually dropping on one knee by the side of young women of their acquaintance, and declaring their affection in the most elegant phraseology; and when this operation has been performed, the young women habitually cast themselves upon the bosoms of the young men, and the young men strain them passionately to their hearts. All the affairs of life are made subordinate to the great and absorbing business of making love, of marrying and giving in marriage.

It is remarkable, too, that the principal characters invariably belong to the very highest ranks of society. Sometimes the hero is a poor man; but, in that case, he always turns out to be a nobleman eventually. Even Mr. Disraeli's novels pale their ineffectual fires before the glow of more than ducal magnificence which pervades the pages of these serials. Social rank is recognised as being a very serious matter too—a thing not to be trifled with. It is all very well for an ex-Premier of England to speak of baronets by their surnames only, and of lords with similar familiarity; but no such flippancy can be permitted here. The name and title should be given in full. If it is a large-sounding name, with plenty of syllables in it—such as “Sir de Montmorency Plantagenet”—so much the better, and the whole should be repeated every time the person in question is referred to—thus: “Lord Reginald Fitzalan gazed fixedly on Lady Mabel de Vavassour for some minutes before either spoke.” Everything that can keep up the sense of an aristocratic atmosphere is carefully dwelt upon. Chocolate is handed “in a cup worth a matter of forty guineas or so.” The faithless lover leans his heated brow upon “the elegant marble mantelpiece,” and the damsel whom he has betrayed buries her sobbing face in “the soft cushions of crimson velvet.” Everybody is in a chronic state of evening dress. According to some of the engravings, the

ladies wear it in the daytime, and even make rowing excursions in low bodices. But the engravings are not always to be depended on; in fact, there is a slight suspicion of the occasional use of old blocks which have already done duty in another capacity; for a ship's cabin sometimes presents astonishing dimensions, and appears to have its roof supported by large marble pillars. Perhaps, however, this merely arises from a vague desire to impress the importance of the hero's social position upon the mind of the reader.

The narrative is usually given in short sentences, each having a paragraph to itself, by which it would seem that some special impressiveness is intended to be secured. Thus:—

“He listened attentively.

“But the sound had now ceased.

“He searched in every direction, but could find no trace of the speaker.

“Then he returned slowly to the house.”

If, however, these publications have a somewhat mirth-provoking aspect, they have also a very grave one. They are not merely burlesque versions of “*Lothair*” or “*Lady Audley's Secret*,” they are the serious literature of the lower classes; and it may be of importance to know what effect they are likely to have upon the minds and lives of those who do not laugh at them, but believe in them, and take them for earnest.

There are some of these cheap serials that we may condemn at once, and in the strongest terms—those absurd, but most dangerous and vicious, stories of highwaymen, in which robbery is represented as a pleasant joke, and murder as a brave and dashing exploit. The thief who is the subject of the tale is deliberately spoken of as “our hero.” His elegant appearance and “small white hands” are mentioned, and his “courtly ease” described. He has a “stout heart in which fear could find no place.” As for officers of justice, he bestows “a careless look of contempt on the villainous visages of the hiring theftakers who had helped to hunt him down.” The judge who tries him is held up to scorn and reprobation. The robber's illicit love is elevated into a noble sentiment. His table is “spread with rich viands,” and his cup “sparkles with generous wine.” Such trash seems ridiculous enough; but upon some minds it has, unfortunately, a too-powerful

influence. Every now and then we read in the police reports of some juvenile delinquent who confesses that he has been led into evil courses by a desire to emulate the heroes of these trumpery romances. Surely some means should be devised to put a stop to their publication. To establish in this country a censorship of the press would be attended with great difficulty, nor is it at all certain that its operation would be beneficial.

But we are strangely inconsistent in these things. The performance of "Jack Sheppard" is prohibited; but, quite recently, Velvet Grawl was permitted nightly to assail Dick Wastrell with ineffectual pistol at the Queen's Theatre, and the deeds of Claude Duval and Dick Turpin are held up to admiration in half the news-shops of the metropolis.

The influence of even the better sort of these sensational publications cannot be said to be a beneficial one. To say the least, they familiarise their readers with vices, of which it is a happiness, if not a merit, to be ignorant. Even where vice itself is not directly praised, its details are dwelt upon with such evident satisfaction, and its associations are painted in such attractive colours, that the feeble morality which is now and then thrown in, as a sort of saving clause, is utterly inadequate to counteract its influence.

The sensuous and erotic tendency of the stories of which they are chiefly composed has been already dwelt upon. The result may be seen in the numerous matrimonial advertisements which most of them admit to their columns. Probably the advertisements are not all genuine; but many must be so, and from one point of view they are sufficiently comical. The female advertisers generally describe themselves as "pretty," always as "loving." This overflowing and indiscriminate tenderness, which only requires for its object a "tall, dark young man (a mechanic preferred)," reminds one of Mark Twain's advice to a correspondent who complained that his lady-love had "shed her affections on another." "You," said he, "should also shed your affections on another, or on several, if there are enough to go round." Unfortunately, these effusions are no laughing matter really. They are the outcome of a vain sentimentality which is always ready to spring up in shallow natures, and which is induced and nou-

rished by these sensuous and highly coloured romances. It is true that the novels patronized by the upper classes cannot claim to be immaculate in this respect; but their readers have many restraints of habit and social law which help to preserve them from serious moral injury. But with those to whom this cheap sensational literature appeals, it is very different. Take, for instance, the large class of factory girls—the class which, a few years ago, would have furnished us with domestic servants, but which now produces machinists, makers of valentines and artificial flowers, &c. These girls have their evenings at their own disposal, can dress in any tawdry finery they please, and are called "miss." What good results can be hoped for when their intellectual food is such as has been just described? At best they can but imbibe dreamy and unwholesome fancies of fictitious grandeur—ideas of love without those of duty, and of pleasure without corresponding effort or self-denial.

What, then, is to be done? Something has been done already in the gradual recognition of the principle that the best way to give a distaste for rubbish is to create an appreciation of what is truly valuable. This was the original idea of "Penny Readings," but it was not carried out. The entertainments were seldom sufficiently good to be of any real use, and did not much interest the class for which they were intended. The steps which have been taken of late to publish English classics in a cheap and attractive form, and the efforts to place within the reach of the poor, magazines which are not only harmless, but are, from a literary point of view, worth reading, and to supply them with the means of studying the highest efforts of art, as at the Bethnal-green Museum, are movements that deserve hearty support and diligent extension.

Especially should we endeavour to promote better and more useful education. It is of no use to teach a child *how* to read unless we also teach him *what* to read. A little knowledge is indeed a dangerous thing.

Could we but settle our sectarian differences, and agree to teach the children of the poor not merely the "three Rs," but something also of the three Christian graces, our cheap literature might be plentiful enough, but we should soon witness a reduction in the demand for cheap sensation.

TABLE TALK.

I HAVE told the following to so many people, all of whom found it new, that it may be so to half the world. Colonel M., of the —th, was, twenty years ago, the best billiard player in the British army; and, walking into a billiard room in the Quadrant, met there an American, who was knocking about the balls. "Sir," said he, "I like your style of play," in rather a patronising tone. "Wal," said the Transatlantic, in an offhand way, "you are not the first man who has said that." "Suppose," said the colonel, "we play a game together, what points shall I give you?" "Guess I'll play you for anything you like, without the points." "Sir," said the colonel, rather taken aback, "perhaps you are not aware that my name is M.?" (expecting an immediate acceptance of any number of points). "M. presents no idea to me," said the stranger. "Very good, sir," said the colonel, with a pitying smile, "then I will play you even." And before ten strokes he found, to his utter astonishment, that he had, for the first time for many years, got more than his own match. After easily administering a most hollow defeat, the American turned to the colonel, and said, "You had the goodness, sir, to tell me that your name was M.; which, I said, presented no idea to me. Mine is Jonathan Kentfield; which, I guess, will present some idea to you."

I HOPE MY readers who study German will not take it ill if I remind them of a most beautiful passage in Goethe's "Egmont," wherein the hero apostrophises sleep—being kept awake, the night before his execution, by the workmen hammering at the scaffolding on which he was to suffer the next day. Well, he was a hero. The constancy with which he met his fate would alone entitle him to be called one. For many years, to paraphrase Lord Macaulay, the thoughts of him have set my soul on fire. Goethe's fine play, Beethoven's colossal overture—of which the outline might easily be filled in for a thousand instruments—the handsome statue at Brussels, have fed the flames.

"MALIBRAN'S DEAD, Duvernay's fled," Lord Tomnoddy says, in Barham's legend. We have had nobody like her since, no

singer with the romantic and eventful story of Maria Malibran née Garcia. I am not old enough ever to have heard her; but I am told, by those who have, that no singer of that day could sustain any sort of comparison with her, for appearance, style, or voice. Her unexampled energy, combined with her dramatic and vocal talents, enabled her to throw every other artist into the shade in every capital of Europe; and her excellent knowledge of the English language enabled her to take every prima donna's part in London, where she died at the early age of twenty-eight, after spending the greater part of her large gains in charity; and obtained the honour of a public funeral, the only singer who has ever done so.

I CANNOT SAY that, when I was at Jamaica, we any of us appreciated the "irrepressible nigger," but I have brought away a few good stories about him, of which the following are a fair sample:—One of our chief struggles was to repress the boundless curiosity and impertinence of the coloured members of the colonial legislature. I remember one of these gentry asking a friend of mine point blank what his pay was, to which he replied, "Not knowing, I really can't tell you; but I have no doubt my servant can. I believe he draws it for blacking or something."—When I was at Bermuda I had a sunstroke, and it was necessary that I should be shipped off to the temperate climate of Halifax. On my proposing to my sable nurse—a lady of about seventy, and by no means handsome, even as those people go—to accompany me, she drew herself up proudly, and said, in an offended tone, "No, sar—can't possibly do dat, sar. My reputation, sar—irretrievably ruined!"

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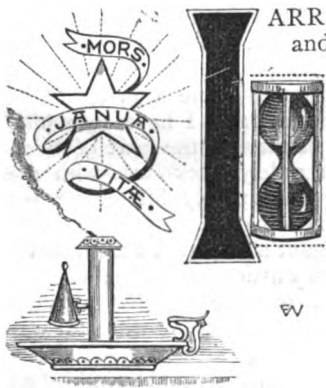
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CHAPTER IX.



I ARRIVED home and got to work again, and ceased to brood over my disappointment. I had too much to do to feel utterly miserable; but it would not be truth were I to say that I was happy. My mind was unsettled for several reasons. I was sorry for Charles Woodward and his rash entanglement; I was puzzled as to the identity of the fair girl whose image, though seen but for a passing moment, was indelibly stamped upon my heart; I was anxious about the result of my approaching examinations; and I was hurt and annoyed by my friend Robert's desertion; for, although three weeks had elapsed since the date of my visit at The Grove, I had neither seen nor heard anything of him.

Charles, too, avoided me; and when we did meet, was sullen and moody, and answered me in monosyllables only.

"Charley," I said to him one day, "I wish this had never been."

"What?" he asked, in a snarling tone of voice. "What are you driving at?"

"Your engagement with Miss Matilda," I replied.

"Why," he exclaimed, "you advised it yourself!"

"My dear fellow," I replied, "as I told you before, I was joking, and never for a moment dreamt that you would take my idle words seriously."

"Then you shouldn't have spoken idle words."

"I am very sorry, Charley."

"Well, let it be a lesson to you how you do it again."

"It will, indeed, be a lesson to me," I replied.

"All right; but look here—you don't suppose I'm quite a fool, do you?"

I shook my head; I could not trust myself to make him a verbal answer.

"Well," he continued, "you don't imagine, I hope, that I'm green enough to go and entangle myself with a woman nearly, if not quite, old enough to be my mother, without some consideration, do you?"

"Consideration!"

"Ay, consideration; the old girl's as good as a gold mine."

"Charles!" I exclaimed, "you are just what you always were. You are not one bit altered in the world."

"I should say not," he replied with a half-sigh, "and sometimes I feel inclined to make away with myself; but an inward conviction that I shall yet leave a mark behind me invariably comes to the rescue, just in the nick of time to prevent me putting into execution the numerous rash resolves I make every day of my life."

"I wish it had prevented you making one false step."

"It's no false step," he replied, "if you are alluding to my engagement; for she's as good as a gold mine, as I told you before. She has got a recipe—I have promised not to say what is in it, or I'd take you into the secret, Tom—for an ointment, or pomatum, that will make the hair grow on the baldest head in a fortnight; and she's going to take out a patent for it, when she has the money, and has sold a quantity to a man in Dawson-

street, who speaks very highly of it. At her request I invented a name for it. What do you think of Anorthocome?"

I smiled at the absurdity of the whole idea.

"Has she ever tried it on any one?" I inquired.

"Tried it? Scores of times. Have you remarked the Counsellor's head lately?"

"No, I can't say I have."

"Well, do—look at it to-day at dinner, and tell me what change you see there. Why, man alive, we shall be as rich as Holloway in no time; and you'll see the magic word Anorthocome posted up everywhere, hang me if you don't!"

"I presume you have finally given up all idea of going into the church?"

"Not I, friend; it is much too respectable a profession. I am to be ordained next month, and have received the promise of a curacy in the west from an old friend of my father's. I'll make as good a parson as he does, any way."

"I thought your father was dead."

"So he is, stupid—years ago. I was alluding to his friend. I wish to goodness the old man had been alive, for he might have been a bishop by this time, and would have been able to push me on."

"What a profanation of the sacred office!"

"Pooh! I'll bet you any money you like I'll make a better parson than you would, there! What odds will you take?"

"You know perfectly well, Charley, I never bet; and, only I believe you are a thousand times a better man than you affect to be, I'd cut your acquaintance altogether."

"Kind and considerate of you; but I may as well relieve your mind of a load. I had quite made up my mind to propose for my fair fiancée some days before you suggested the step; in fact, I had determined to do so one Sunday night, when we were in the parlour together, and she had entrusted me with the secret of the pomatum, and asked my advice and assistance. I invented a classical name for it on the spot."

"A nice Sunday evening's amusement!" I replied.

"Just so; but my heart failed me at the moment, and it was not until you put it into my head again that I plucked up resolution enough to put my neck in the noose."

After all, then, I was not entirely free from blame!

Poor Miss Matilda! how I pitied her! Her love and admiration were extravagant. She would sit all dinner-time with her eyes fixed on her betrothed, watching his every look; whilst on his part he treated her with studied indifference and contempt.

"I do be wonderin' at ye, Miss Fernley," exclaimed the lovely Miss Sharman, one day at dinner, "to be after spilin' yer mate that way!"

The beef was rather too much cooked; but Mr. Woodward, as Miss Matilda immediately explained, could not bear meat that was underdone, and, as Miss Sharman asserted, "everything in the house has to give way to Misther Woodward, it appears."

Poor Miss Matilda! I have seen her go down on her knees to pull off her fiancé's boots, when he came home after attending the college lectures; and I have seen him, after she had performed the part of boot-jack, push her rudely backwards with the foot she had just humbly kissed in a paroxysm of adoration.

Her extravagant admiration was no doubt ridiculous to an outside beholder; but her devotion ought to have ensured her the respect, at least, of him upon whom it was so profusely lavished.

Poor old girl! how she could have worked herself into the belief—which never left her to the day of her death—that he loved her, I could not understand.

Miss Fernley was, naturally, greatly elated by her sister's "good fortune," as she called it; and, probably on the strength of it, spruced herself up, and made eyes at old Mr. Cornell, who was far too wary a bird to be caught with any such transparent chaff.

I was much hurt by my friend Robert M'Lachlan's desertion—"out of sight out of mind," how often I repeated that proverb during those days; but I could not bring myself to pay another visit at The Grove—notwithstanding the pressing invitations given me, and my own half-promise to accept them—after the studied manner in which her parents had refrained from introducing me to their daughter.

"Their daughter!" I suddenly thought to myself. "Surely that lady cannot be Miss M'Lachlan. She looks to be thirty, at least; and I feel sure Bob's father is not fifty, while Mrs. M'Lachlan cannot be more than forty.

It is quite impossible she can be their daughter."

The idea consoled me, and aided materially in healing my wounded pride. Then, again, who was Sissy?

Nonsense, though; Bob had told me, over and over again, that his sister's name was Emma; and "Sissy" must be a fond abbreviation for Cicely, or Cecilia—probably a friend of the other lady's.

"I dare say they are expecting me to call, and that is the reason I have not seen Bob. I shall walk out there this afternoon."

Such was the final result of my cogitations.

Scarcely had I formed the resolution of calling once more at The Grove, than the postman's knock resounded through the house. I rushed downstairs, four steps at a time, for I was anxiously awaiting letters from Australia, and met Anne on the first landing.

"Here's a note for ye, Mr. Cochrane, sir," exclaimed the untidy one, as she handed me a letter, upon which she had imprinted the marks of her thumb and forefinger in black-lead.

It bore the Dublin postmark, and was neither in my aunt nor uncle's handwriting, neither was it from the Professor. I was puzzled, and turned it round and round in my hand, instead of tearing open the envelope, and solving the mystery at once.

"I can't think who it can be from," I exclaimed aloud.

"Ah, then, can't ye open it, and see?" advised the untidy, who was staring at me with open eyes—for my receiving a letter was an event to be observed in the boarding-house.

Anne's advice was good; so I ran back to my room, tearing open my letter by the way. It was an invitation from The Grove.

"Robert is very angry with you," wrote Mrs. M'Lachlan, "and protests he will not speak to you again, unless you come and dine with us to-day. He has something very particular to say to you, he says, but will tell it to no one but yourself; so I hope you will come, as we are all very anxious to know what the secret can be. Do not be later than six. We are quite alone, and sans cérémonie."

The letter was signed, "Yours sincerely, Catherine M'Lachlan."

Bob was up to some of his old tricks, it appeared. But a great load was taken off my

mind; for no one likes to think himself forgotten by a friend, and I really loved the boy.

"I am going to dine out to-day, Miss Fernley," I said to that lady, later in the afternoon; "and shall probably not be in till late. I have my latch-key, so you need not make any one sit up for me."

"Going to dine out, Mr. Cochrane!" exclaimed my landlady, in apparent surprise. "At your aunt's, I suppose?"

"Not so," I replied. "At my friend M'Lachlan's."

"Mr. Woodward," remarked Miss Matilda, sharply, "thinks it is unsafe to leave the street door on the latch at night."

"Dear me!" I exclaimed. "It has newly come to him."

"Well, you see," replied Miss Matilda, with a soupçon of haughtiness in her tone, "he has received his dividends at the bank to-day, and it would not be pleasant for us to have them stolen."

"No one will touch them, Miss Matilda," I replied, quite unable to repress a smile.

"I hope not," replied the lady, stiffly.

On the occasion of my first visit to Clonskeagh, I had made an elaborate toilet, not knowing whom I might meet; but the second time I went in my everyday costume, which was new—or nearly so—comfortable, and, I flattered myself, becoming. I was to be received sans cérémonie.

What, then, was my horror to find a large and fashionably-dressed party playing croquet on the lawn!

Bob was among them, talking to his sister—if she was his sister; and—yes, positively!—my fair unknown. Certainly, the likeness between them was amazing. I felt dizzy for a moment, and my knees knocked together to such an extent that I had the greatest difficulty in walking.

Bob bounded over the grass, and shook me warmly by both hands.

"Oh, you wretch!" he exclaimed, while his eyes sparkled with pleasure—"to go play us such a trick."

"What trick?" I asked, trying to look as if I were perfectly at my ease.

"Why, not to come near us for such an age. Not but what I'd have left you there, as far as I was concerned," he continued, contracting his brow into a frown, and pretending to be angry with me; "but the mum would write to ask you out to-day."

"I have been very busy reading—" I began.

"Very likely! as if you couldn't have spared us an hour or so, of an evening; especially when you knew Emmy was dying to be introduced to you."

"My dear boy," I replied, "I was under the impression your father and mother did not wish us to become acquainted."

"You were under what?" exclaimed my friend, laying tremendous emphasis upon the last word. "Why you must have taken leave of any little sense you ever had, old Jonathan. You've never seen her!"

"Never seen her!"

"Don't go poll-parroting like that—of course you haven't seen her. How could you?"

"She came into the drawing-room the other evening, just before I left; and neither your father nor mother introduced me."

"In the name of fortune, what are you talking about?"

"About your sister, Bob, of course."

"My sister! old Marshall my sister!"

And my volatile friend burst into a loud laugh that drew every eye upon us.

"Miss Marshall," he shouted, "will you be good enough to step over here—this young man says you are my sister."

The lady, however, whom I had supposed to be Miss M'Lachlan, not only took no notice of my friend's request, but deliberately turned her back upon us.

"Why, that's the governess," continued Robert, in a somewhat lower key, and laughing till the tears came into his eyes.

"Governess!" I repeated—"what governess?"

"Why, Emmy's, Mister Poll Parrot, or Echo, or whatever your name is. I fancy you've gone and fallen in love with her. Wouldn't that be a jolly go!"

"Don't be absurd, Robert."

I was so confused—for all this was shouted out at the top of his voice—that I could not look up for a few minutes; but I heard a sweet voice say, "Don't be ridiculous, Robert!" and directly afterwards a small white-gloved hand was held out to me, and the same voice continued—

"How do you do, Mr. Cochrane? You musn't mind Robert's nonsense, for you can't think how very unhappy your desertion made him; and now he's so glad to see you he doesn't know what he's doing."

"I say, come now," replied her brother,

"don't you go telling any crams about me, Emmy, or maybe I won't turn the tables."

I looked up. The fair unknown was, after all, my friend's sister!

Yes—she was strangely like him; but not a handsome likeness. Her features were less regular, her skin less delicate—indeed, there were freckles on her forehead, and on her nose, which was a trifle too *rétroussé*; but she had the same gentle, but nevertheless expressive, gray-blue eyes, the same golden hair—a degree lighter, perhaps—and her voice was marvellously sweet, and thrilled through me like the song of the love birds of my native land.

Perfectly quiet and self-possessed, she was thoroughly ladylike in all her movements; and the most graceful and fascinating girl I had ever seen.

I had understood that she was older than her brother; and yet she had a governess!

Soon after my arrival, the party on the lawn began to disperse, and we dined *en famille*; and, I suppose, as much *sans cérémonie* as was possible in that great house.

I had the honour and happiness of handing in Miss M'Lachlan to dinner. Bob escorted his mother, and his father took charge of the governess.

It is scarcely worth while noticing the charms or imperfections of that lady, for she has small part to play in these pages, where she appears but as a transient meteoric ray, flashing across the midnight atmosphere for an instant, and disappearing into, as she came from, inscrutable darkness.

She was tall and fair, and very thin; her face can best be described as hatchety, her waist as waspish, her voice as vixenish; while her manner was affected, and the train of her black silk dress unnecessarily redundant.

She attacked me about my native land.

"Was it true that the birds never sang, and that the flowers had no perfume? Was it really a fact that the moon was turned upside down, and that the cherries grew with the stones outside?"

And to all my assurances that she had been misinformed, she replied "Really!" in a most incredulous tone of voice, accompanied with a shrug of her bony shoulders, which it appeared she was fond of displaying.

I could not help fancying what a capital match she would have been for Charley Woodward, if it be true that like seeks like;

for she was as thin as he was, and about his age.

It was plain to see that my friend and she were at daggers drawn with each other; nor did Miss M'Lachlan seem particularly partial to her. However, Mrs. M'Lachlan was kind and friendly; but with Bob and his father she was certainly no favourite—the latter, indeed, scarcely taking the trouble to conceal his dislike.

I wondered many times during the evening what she was kept there for.

She and my friend's sister played and sang several duets together, but their voices were as different as the croaking of a raven and the cooing of a turtle-dove. However, Miss Marshall was mistress of her instrument, and played the piano to admiration.

I am not particularly fond of instrumental music, as a rule; but her performance moved me. It was exquisite; and when she quitted the instrument, Mrs. M'Lachlan rose up and kissed her, and Bob and his father cried "Bravo!"

The lady took all their admiration as her due; and turning to me, said—

"Do you play chess, Mr. Cochrane?"

"I did, a very little, at one time," I replied; "but I have almost forgotten all about it, it is so long now since I tried."

"I shall be most happy to teach you over again."

"You are very kind."

I did not want to play.

Bob flew to my rescue.

"Drop that, Miss Marshall," he exclaimed; "Jonathan and I are going to have a chat, and you must get some one else to play chess with you."

"Rude boy!" muttered the lady, below her breath; and Bob must have heard her, for I did, and we were standing together; but he took no notice.

"Come into the conservatory," he continued, taking my arm. "I suppose we may smoke there?" he said, addressing his father.

"Yes," replied Mr. M'Lachlan; "but keep out of the fernery, boys."

I chanced to be looking at the governess just at that moment, and saw her shrug her shoulders impatiently.

"I think I shall go upstairs," she said, speaking to Mrs. M'Lachlan. "My head aches."

The lady of the house made her sit down beside her on the sofa, and whispered some-

thing which I did not hear, but which had a reviving effect upon Miss Marshall, I imagined, for her eyes sparkled, and she commenced talking, in a low tone of voice, but with a great deal of animation.

Bob had nothing particular to say to me after all.

"I wanted to get you out of the clutches of that old cat," he answered, when I had asked him what it was he had to say.

"Does she teach your sister, Bob?"

"Teach Emmy! Well, that's a good one! Not now, of course. She hasn't taught her anything these three years. And what she sticks on here for I'm sure I can't tell. We hate her, the gov and I; but the mum—I believe the old thing comes it over her, and that's the reason she won't let her go."

"She appears to be a very accomplished lady."

"There, don't you go praising her up, old Jonathan, or I'll think you've gone and fallen in love with her."

I smiled.

"What do you think of Emmy?"

What did I think of her? Why, that she would simply have been the perfection of beauty if she had not chanced to have a younger brother named Robert; but that, nevertheless, she was the most fascinating girl I had ever seen, and my heart's regent for evermore. But I carefully avoided giving utterance to the above thoughts, and was cogitating for a fitting answer to my friend's inquiry, when he repeated it.

"My dear David," I replied, "she is a very charming young lady; but our acquaintance is so very short—"

"Isn't she pretty?" he persisted.

"She is beautiful," I replied.

"Come," said he, laughing, "you are beginning to warm up, Jonathan. You pronounced that word 'beautiful' with an unction that was most gratifying and quite refreshing; for every one, you must know, declares that we are the picture of each other."

"David, my boy, don't be so vain."

"I? I'm not a bit vain, old man. What on earth have I got to be vain about?"

By this time we had finished our cigars.

"Come," I said, "let us go back into the drawing-room."

"One moment, Jonathan. Since you won't tell me what you honestly think about Emmy, I'll tell you what she said about you—there! Are you dying to know?"

"I don't feel a bit like dying," I replied.

"May be so; but you're blushing like fun, if that's anything to go by."

"I don't believe I'm blushing."

"Oh, aint you just! Why, you're as red as a turkey-cock. Well, I asked her what she thought of you—and what do you think she answered?"

"I have not the slightest idea."

"She said you were a gentlemanlike fellow, and she thought she should like you very well. There. Hurrah!"

"My dear Robert, don't," I expostulated. "They'll wonder what's the matter."

"Never mind, Jonathan—it'll be a match some day."

"You ridiculous boy," I said, "don't be so absurd."

"Look here," he continued—"if you say another word, I'll go in and tell her all you said about her."

"Robert!"

"Well, will you promise me to fall in love with her as fast as ever you can?"

"My dear boy," I exclaimed, without the power of arresting the confession, "I have loved her to distraction since I first saw her, more than six months ago."

At supper I sat opposite Emma—I cannot refrain from calling her by her Christian name. She looked lovely. I felt that, with the slightest provocation, I could have fallen down on my knees and worshipped her.

Yes, she was altogether lovely; and my heart was prostrate, bound for ever in adamantine chains, at her feet.

Soon afterwards I took my leave, and went home to think; and, after some hours, fell asleep to dream of her.

Surely she was my fate.

It may be surmised that no long interval after this elapsed between my visits at The Grove. I went there every day, nominally to read with Bob—whose examination, as well as my own, was approaching; but, by some mysterious process of mental evolution, our studies invariably ended in a long conversation, of which Emmy was the theme.

Robert loved his sister, and was as sincerely attached to me as I was to him. He would have hailed an engagement between us with the liveliest joy; but what would his father and mother say to such a marriage for their only daughter?

I felt more than doubtful of gaining their consent; but Robert was full of hope; and, all the time, we neither of us had the slightest inkling of what the young lady's feelings on the subject might be.

In the meantime, we saw a good deal of each other, we three; and when we chanced to be by ourselves, Bob kept good-naturedly in the background, in order to give me a chance, as he laughingly used to say.

I have often thought since that my conduct at that time was not as strictly honourable as it ought to have been; though, Heaven knows, it was my deep love that prompted me, almost unconsciously, to prosecute my suit.

Did Emma love me, or was her cordiality merely the expression of a natural goodwill towards the friend of her brother? What would I not, then, have given for an answer that would have set my doubts at rest, one way or the other?

She never avoided me: that, I thought, was one great point in my favour.

Her father and mother, too, seemed to have no objection to our growing intimacy; but, on the other hand, Miss Marshall enacted the part of duenna to such perfection, that they probably had no fear.

She never allowed us to be alone together for a moment when she was at home; and it was only on the occasion of her accompanying Mrs. M'Lachlan into town that we were permitted to enjoy a solitary ramble through the grounds. I say solitary, for Bob, as I have before stated, always lingered behind as much as possible.

"How would you like to live in Australia, Miss M'Lachlan?" I once ventured to inquire as we strolled together beneath the elms in the park.

"Not at all," was her immediate and unhesitating reply.

My heart was crushed for the remainder of the day; for, next to Emma, I loved my native land.

SOME WELSH LEGENDS.

THESE are days not only of progress, but of renovation. History is read "between the lines," so as to revolutionize all established notions. The old is becoming new again in the revival of all but forgotten lore. The poems and chronicles of the remote past are unearthed from dusty repositories, and receiving a new lease of life.

This work of revival and recovery has been going on for many years in England; and, stimulated perhaps by English example, similar attempts have of late been made in Wales. Tradition pure and simple—that is to say, tales and legends never committed to writing—may be said to have disappeared from among us. Literary activity, the restless search for new topics, and the ever-ready means of publication afforded by the press, have probably secured for all English legends worth preserving a more permanent form than that of mere verbal transmission. But in Wales the state of things is very different. Although it has now a periodical literature of considerable extent, that literature has come into being within the lifetime of men still living, and but a very small part of it is given to matters directly connected with the principality. One result of this is, that many traditions still circulate in the secluded villages and farmhouses of the principality which are still unwritten, or have only lately been committed to writing. The spread of education, the growing circulation of English literature, and with that the decline of the Welsh as a spoken tongue, are facts that are gradually obliterating the memory of such of these legends as still remain, “*llafar gwlad*”—that is, “told among the people.” Many of those that have already been published are of considerable interest; and, for that reason, I lay a few of them before the readers of *ONCE A WEEK*, in the hope that narratives, the recital of which has whiled away many a winter evening amidst the Welsh mountains, may help to pass an idle hour of some who speak another but hardly a strange tongue.

As usual among mountaineers, who are generally more imaginative or more superstitious than dwellers in less romantic regions, these fireside stories deal largely with love, war, and the supernatural, fairies, ghosts, giants, and monsters. Examples taken from one or two of these classes must suffice at present. Those given are from “*Y Gordovigion*” and “*Cymru Fu*,” two Welsh publications, in which they have lately appeared. The first will probably suggest recollections of the immortal Rip van Winkle, whose story, in one form or another, is to be found in the legendary lore of so many nations.

OWAIN AND THE FAIRIES.

Owain and Dafydd were on their way to

the harvest field one evening, to resume the task of gathering in the corn—a duty rendered urgent by the need of making the best of the harvest moon, then at its brightest. They took food with them for their evening meal.

“Boy,” said Owain to his companion, “would it not be well that I should run to Cemaes at supper-time, to get my shoes from the cobbler? Our master is not likely to come to us to-night; and, even if he should, I can get back in time to resume work after supper.”

“Yes, you can easily do that,” was the answer.

Supper-time having come, Owain put his bread and cheese in his pocket, and started on his errand. After going some distance he perceived close to his path a circle of little men and women, some of grotesque, and all of playful aspect. At the sight he was of course greatly frightened; but, after pausing a moment to recover breath, he summoned courage to approach them, and on doing so saw a little woman of rare beauty in the midst of the group. She was so surpassingly fair that honest Owain was quite smitten by her charms. Seeing his attention fixed on herself, she ran from among the fairy crowd, and, clasping her soft arms round his neck, invited him to join them; to which he joyfully assented, for his fears had now left him, and he thought only of this, the loveliest creature of her sex he had ever seen. Long was the time he spent in company of his new friends—company so delightful that he forgot the lapse of time. But at last, remembering his duty, and fearing that Dafydd might need his help, or that his employer might come to the field and discover his absence, he unwillingly returned without going to Cemaes.

When he reached the field the scene was wholly changed. His fellow-servant was not there. The field was a pasture in which cattle were quietly grazing. While wondering at this, a keen sense of hunger came over him. Putting his hand into his pocket for the food he had brought, he found it hard as a stone. On going to the farmhouse, he found there, not his master's household, but strangers, to whom he was as unknown as they to him. Utterly bewildered, he started to look for a lodging at the house of some neighbours, and on his way met one whose appearance seemed in

some way familiar. They both hesitated a moment, until Owain asked—

"Are you Dafydd?"

"Yes," was the answer. "But who are you? Surely not Owain?"

"Yes, I am Owain."

"Why, where did you go to that evening?"

"Take me home with you, and I'll tell you. How long is that ago?"

"Well," rejoined Dafydd, "let me see—I have been married fifteen years, and you went away five years before that."

"What became of my shoes?"

"The shoemaker kept them till we gave you up for lost, and then sold them."

They started for Dafydd's home together, Owain on the way telling Dafydd his experiences of twenty years with the fairies, and hearing of the many changes that had taken place while he was away.

FAIRY HOSPITALITY.

A certain man—probably John Jones by name—dwelt at Pont Newydd, Carnarvonshire. One night, when returning homewards, after rather deep potations at the village inn, he was suddenly whisked away by unseen hands to a splendid palace, where he found himself waited upon by servants in gorgeous attire, and supplied with luxuries of which he had never even dreamt. At length, worn out with these novel enjoyments, he became sleepy, and asked permission to be shown a bench in some quiet corner where he might repose. He was urged to go into another room, and rest on a couch; but he firmly refused, and was at last allowed to sleep where he was. When he awoke he found he had spent his hours of forgetfulness on the very edge of a steep precipice overhanging a lake.

THE CRUSADER'S WEDDING.

Euronwy, one of the fairest of her sex, was the only child of a Welsh noble who dwelt in Lley, not far from Aberdaron. Arthur's home was not far, and there were but few dwellings between the two houses. Both children being nearly the same age, and of similar worldly position, the two were playmates from their earliest years. In due time they passed from playmates to lovers; but, before they married, it was decided that Arthur, who longed for military glory, should go away to fight under the banner of the Cross for a while. Soon after

his departure, a fierce war broke out between the English and Welsh. A force of English invaders pushed their way into Lley, and beset the home of the beautiful Euronwy. In those stormy times, the houses of country gentlemen were meant more for strongholds than pleasaunces; so the invaders found that, in attacking this mansion, they had undertaken no easy task—more especially as the two families, in addition to the strength of their houses, had plenty of sturdy retainers. The home of Euronwy would probably have fallen a prey to the foe if a strong force had not been sent by Arthur's father to assail the enemy in the rear. The manœuvre succeeded. The English were beaten off, many of them being taken and cast into the dungeons provided for the accommodation of prisoners of war. Among these captives was a young English knight named Alfred, who remained in the custody of Euronwy's father. One result of this was that he fell desperately in love with the young Welsh beauty; and when at last he was set at liberty, he told her of his love, and resolved to make her his wife or perish in the attempt. Now, in those days there was a class of travelling harpers who passed from house to house, being everywhere gladly received for the sake of their mastery of an instrument of which the Welsh were passionately fond. Few guests were more welcome than the wandering minstrel. Some time after the parting of Alfred and Euronwy, a travelling harper came to the door, and played some of those airs which are never sweeter than when performed on the instrument for which they were first composed. Alfred—for the disguised harper was no other—at once became a favoured guest. He had been at the pains of learning to play the harp, for the express purpose of carrying off the girl who had so completely won his heart.

Circumstances favoured his plan. Euronwy was accustomed to go in the early twilight to walk to and fro along the path on which she had parted with the absent Arthur, and of this habit Alfred decided to avail himself. He had previously arranged that a strong force of his friends should land at Aberdaron, whenever he sent them word to come. The next step was to frequent this path at the hour when Euronwy was to be found there. Ere long she—unsuspecting evil—began to take more pleasure in his society than her absent lover would have

liked, if he had been there to see; and often, in the long summer evenings, would the harper play his instrument, while Euronwy sat by listening. As he gained her confidence, by degrees she told him of Arthur, that he was away in the Crusade, and that at a fixed time he would return to claim her for his bride. She besought the disguised knight to await the lover's return, in order to play his harp at the wedding. Alfred assenting, delayed the arrival of his friends, arranging that they should arrive on the very day of Arthur's return; for he hoped in this way to snatch her, as it were, from the very arms of her lover, so that by such an achievement his prowess might be more conspicuously displayed.

In due time the allies came, bringing with them the treacherous harper's horse and armour. Having met Euronwy as usual, and perceiving that they were near, he played his harp as a signal for their advance; and then, leaving the girl for a moment, went aside into a copse, cast off his disguise, and assumed his martial attire. Returning with some armed men, he seized Euronwy, put her on a horse, and, accompanied by the new-comers, sped away to Aberdaron.

While Alfred carried out this part of his wicked scheme, others went for the priest of Aberdaron, and brought him to the church, compelling him, sword in hand, to hold himself ready for the marriage. Meanwhile, Arthur had returned, and sought his love, who he was told had not come back from her evening walk. To await her return he joined her father, and sat down to tell his adventures; and, as might be supposed, time sped swiftly with his hearers, until at last even their interest in the story of the returned Crusader gave way to anxiety about the girl.

They sought her, but without success. Arthur's feelings may be imagined. But he had been through a school in which he had learned to displace vain regrets by swift action. He promptly called together a band of mounted retainers, and away they sped in search, Arthur with brandished sword urging them on. At the cross-roads they met an old man coming from Aberdaron, who, in answer to their hasty inquiries, told them that a band of horsemen had passed him going that way, and that they had with them a woman whose face was covered. On they went; and, as they approached the church, they could see that,

late as was the hour, there was a light inside. Hastily dismounting, Arthur rushed past the English soldiers who guarded the porch, and, bursting into the church, he saw Euronwy on the point of being forcibly married to the English knight who stood by her side. Both men at once saw what was before them. At the same instant, they drew sword. Then began a deadly duel at the very altar. At last, Arthur, with one mighty stroke, cleft his rival through helmet and skull, and Alfred fell dead on the floor. Euronwy's father, who had arrived by this time, ordered the priest to proceed with the service. Thus weirdly were Arthur and Euronwy reunited for ever, after their long separation; while he who had all but robbed the Crusader of his love lay dead at his feet.

THE FAIRY BRIDE.

The valley which extends from Hafod Ruffydd to Llyn y Dywarchen is called the Fairies' Land, because they might formerly be always seen in some part of it at full moon. In the vale there dwelt a fine young fellow, who spent much more of his time in their company than was good for him. The reason was that he was in love with one of them.

One night, when they met near his home, he joined them as usual; and, in the excitement of love, he seized his fair one, carried her off by main force, and, having brought her to his home, exerted all his arts of persuasion to induce her not to return. At length, overcome by his entreaties, she promised to stay at his house as a servant, and to become his wife, if he could find out her name within a fixed time. He of course began to guess at every conceivable name he could think of, but without success. When almost at his wits' end, and nearly frantic at the prospect of losing his love after all, he chanced one night to be on his way home from market at a rather late hour, when, passing the very spot whence he had carried her off, he perceived a group of fairies, not engaged in their usual pastimes, but seemingly in earnest consultation. He stole along the bed of a stream until within hearing, and then found that they were talking about the abduction of their companion. One of them exclaimed—

"Bronwen, Bronwen, why didst thou leave us to marry a mortal?"

This was truly an ample reward for trail-

ing through the stream, and away he sped homewards, light of heel as of heart.

As soon as he reached home he joyously addressed Bronwen by name. She was much grieved at his discovery of her secret, but promised to stay with him as a servant. She was not long allowed to remain in so humble a position, but at length became his wife.

Once more she made a condition that he should never touch her with iron. This condition was long observed; but one day, when about to saddle his horse, he accidentally touched her with the bit, and she vanished for ever from his sight.

DOGHERTY'S COURTSHIP.

A RUSTIC SKETCH.—IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.

OF course, as all maidens somehow will do, Nannie remonstrated at Dick's snatching a kiss without permission, and pulled a little against him.

"Ah, now, Dick—oh!—ah!—there, now, maybe you're satisfied now. You're a hateful fellow, so you are, and I won't speak a word to you to-night again."

"Whisper, Nannie—how do you think you and me would do thegither?"

"I won't tell you till you take your arm from about my neck."

"Ah, now, sure it's doin' ye no harm. Come 'ere, now, an' quit your pullin', or I'll kiss ye again. Eh, I think you an' me would suit rightly, wouldn't we?"

"Och, don't annoy me, you impudent thing!"

"Sure, I'm not annoying ye, Nannie. I'm only askin' ye a dacent question."

"You are annoying me. You had no business taking that kiss."

"An' sure I towl' ye a dozen times before that I couldn't help it. Upon my throth, Nannie, whenever I look at ye I feel as if I would die aff han' if I didn't kiss ye. Sure there's no use blamin' a body for what they can't help."

"I don't believe a word of what you're saying. You just want to make fun of me."

"Make fun o' ye! There's not a woman in the worl' I like but Nannie Bell. Upon my sowl, Nannie, I can't sleep night or day for thinkin' o' ye. Ye may believe me or not, but it's jist as thrue as the owl pair's snorin—an' I think you'll not contherdict me in that."

"No, I won't; but—now, quit your nonsense, Dick; you won't get another kiss from me the night. Indeed, I'll shout and waken them if you do."

"What would ye do that for? Sure ye would git as much blame as me. Ach, Nannie, dear, in sowl you'll be the death of me. Come 'ere, ye angel ye, an' give us jist this one more."

"I won't—I won't, I tell you now. I—there, now, you didn't get one, after all!"

"Faith, it wasn't a good one, any way. What do ye twist and twine and put your han' over your mouth that way for?"

"Just because—"

"Because what?"

"Because I don't want you to kiss me."

"An' what for?"

"Just because I don't."

"Well, sure, when I want to kiss you, ye might oblige a body, especially when ye know he's half dead about ye."

"But I don't know anything of the kind."

"Well, I tell ye, then."

"But I don't believe you."

"An' what the devil would ye have a sowl to do?"

"Nothing."

"An' howl' your tongue, an' give us another kiss—a dacent one this time. Now, now, what are ye pullin' an' haulin' about? By the powers, ye would think I was goin' to bite your nose aff instead of only to give ye a quiet, wee kiss. There, now, that's a better one. Ach, Nannie, dear, I wish you an' I were married. We would live thegither jist as happy as a pig in a trough. Give us your han', my darlin', and tell me if ye could ever think anything about Dick Dogherty. Mind ye, I'm in the way o' well-doin'. I'll have a brave wee farm after a while, stocked an' all; an' we can live on it like priests, an' be able to show something respectable as well. If ye could have any notion to me, Nannie, we might get tethered some o' these days. Eh, love, what would you think of it? Now, don't be backward."

Nannie stared into the fire without speaking.

"If ye don't care for me, Nannie, tell me, for I wouldn't like to marry a woman that hadn't a notion to me. It would be heart breakin' to me to hear that ye don't care about me; but I would rather hear it a hundred times than take ye if ye haven't a wee likin' to me. What—what are ye cryin' for, Nannie, dear? Will ye not have me?"

"Yes; but—but I—I—I'm sure father would—wouldn't let me."

"Tut—tut, is that all, my darlin? There—there's a kiss for ye, now; and let me wipe your eyes; and don't cry, like a good girl. What do we care about the owl' curmudgeon? If he gives any of his owl' jaw, I'll marry ye affhan'. There, now, straighten up an' don't cry, an you'll fin' it'll be all right, that's a love."

And Dick took Nannie in his arms, and kissed away her tears till they ceased to flow.

Just at this moment, however, Dick was compelled to let go his betrothed to sneeze, in which, strange to say, Nannie followed his example. They both sneezed so violently for some minutes that they were in momentary danger of wakening the old couple.

When with watery eyes they began to look about them, behold the whole kitchen was filled with a thin smoke, which seemed every moment becoming more dense.

"Oh, Dick, what will we do?" said Nannie in alarm the moment she saw it. "Some of the boys have" (sneeze) "seen you coming in, and are going to smoke us out. They'll be wakening the old pair next. What will we do, Dick, for goodness' sake?"

"Bad luck" (sneeze) "to them, for a pack o' blackguards" (sneeze). "Couldn't they ha' minded their own business? By the hole in my coat—an' that's a torn oath—but there'll be a regular row if they raise the owl' pair. Divil a" (sneeze) "divil a bit if I know what we'll do."

"Hide some place" (sneeze)—"hide, Dick—quick, quick" (sneeze)—"quick!"

"Ay, hide—but where'll I hide?—that's" (sneeze)—"that's what I would like" (sneeze) "to know. We're goin' to be choked! Let us out o' this some place (cheeha! cheeha! cheeha!). For the Lord's (cheeha! cheeha!) sake, where'll we (a-cheeha!)—where'll we go any way? Curse their (cheeha!) picthurs for a lot o' (a-cheeha! cheeha! cheeha!) murderin' villains!"

At this moment a loud rapping was heard at the old couple's window, and the next minute the snoring ceased. The old pair had evidently been wakened.

"In the name o' mercy, John, what's that?" spoke the elderly dame first.

"I don't know," was the grumbled reply, "but I soon will. Where's that gun? I'll howl' ye, I'll put them from cuttin' any capers on me."

During this time Dick and Nannie were frantically holding their hands over their mouths, squeezing their noses, and otherwise half-choking themselves, to prevent their sneezing.

"Oh, Dick, Dick," exclaimed Nannie in despair, "I can't keep in any longer. I must snee—(a-a-a-cheeha!)."

"Off with you, then—out o' this quick—quick! I hear the owl' boy comin'. Make haste—make haste!"

"Here, then—this way—fast, fast!" said Nannie in an excited whisper. "Hide behind the scullery door, and I'll go up to my room."

"All (a-cheeha!) all right," and Dick made a hurried charge for the scullery.

Poor, unfortunate Dick! As he made that hasty scramble he tripped over a creepy, and fell with a great noise his full length just opposite the door that led to the patriarch's bed-room.

The said patriarch, having heard the sneezes, was just then charging along the passage with his gun pointed before him, looking about as amiable as paterfamilias under such circumstances usually does. Without looking he rushed into the kitchen, and, tripping over the prostrate form of Richard, in his turn went down like a bullock, taking with him a large tin dish which had been placed near the edge of the table, and causing about as much noise as if the roof had fallen in.

Dick gave vent to a suppressed groan when he felt the weight and the tin dish falling on him, and then scrambled to his legs and made for the door through which Nannie had just passed.

"This way, Dick—this way," whispered Nannie, hurriedly, at the top of the stairs; and "this way" he went, three steps at a time. Right into her sanctum they flew, and locked the door inside.

"Did ye thry the outside door, Nannie?—for I'm blowed but I forgot all about it."

"Yes—yes, they have it tied outside, and I don't know how you'll get out. You couldn't get down by the hen-house roof, for it's only partially put up again, and wouldn't bear half your weight. Oh, what'll we do, Dick—I hear him coming!"

"I have it—I have it! Give you a scream, and give me one o' them quilts. Scream, now—scream!"

Nannie obeyed, and screamed vociferously.

Thump, thump, thump now went the old gentleman at the door.

"Let me in, ye villain ye, whoever ye are, or I'll smash the door and shoot ye!"

"Here, give me the howl' o' this quilt," ejaculated Dick, somewhat excitedly; "and run you to the far corner of the room, and shout 'Help—murder—thieves!' like a good un. Won't I get out by one o' the windows o' the room below this?"

"Yes, that's true—I think you will."

"All right, then; go on, now, and shout 'Murder and thieves!' Look sharp. I'm goin' to let him in."

Nannie again obeyed, and made the house ring with her cries for delivery from the hands of the assassins.

"I tell ye once more to let me in, or I'll smash the door to pieces," shouted the old man, wildly.

Dick stood with the quilt spread in his hands, and with his foot against the back of the door. He then turned the key suddenly, and opened the door just enough to admit the enraged patriarch, who of course quickly squeezed himself in. The moment he stood inside, Dick, holding the quilt high up, stepped forward, and, throwing it over him, gave him a push that sent him staggering against the bed. This done, out he flew, and down the stairs, and through the parlour window like a madman, just in time to see five young men hurrying away, screaming with laughter at the success of their trick.

Dick did not go after them, for he knew it would only make matters worse, and he had played the same game himself in his time. He therefore contented himself with wandering home, alternately cursing his fate and chuckling in delight at his good fortune in winning Nannie.

Dick shortly after that came into his inheritance, upon which Nannie's father gave his consent to the marriage of his daughter; and three months after the happy and unhappy night that they were betrothed, Dick and Nannie were made one till death.

He is a father now, and is likely to be more extensively so; and he never regrets the day that he promised eternal fidelity to Nannie.

It may be wondered how she got over the difficulties of the night we have been describing. Well, sooth to say, she represented to her father that Dick was a thief,

and that she was just about retiring quietly to rest when this thief came rushing into her bed-room, and threatened to shoot her if she said a word.

With regard to the smoke in the kitchen, some neighbour boys had mistaken the thief for a young fellow coming to court, and so had played the old trick.

In conclusion, allow me to intimate to my readers that this little story is quite true. There is no caricature or exaggeration about it. The smoking-out is done as follows: A kail stalk is bored through the heart, and filled with tow, mixed sometimes with a little pepper. This is lighted at one end, and, after burning a few seconds, placed at the foot of the door or against the keyhole. The other end is then blown, and thus the smoke goes through the aperture and fills the room, shortly compelling the occupants to sneeze heavily, and as long as they remain in the apartment.

Of course the door is previously fastened, so that the lover may not get out. It is customary among the peasants of Antrim, when they go a-courting, to sit up by the kitchen fire half the night with the object of their choice, while all the rest of the family are in their beds. More than half the courtships are carried on clandestinely in this manner; but other young men, who are acceptable as sons-in-law to the parents of the girl, go in while the family is up, and are allowed to sit with her as long as they like, so that they be away in the morning.

INDIAN SOCIETY.

I WAS told I was in luck when I mentioned to some friends who had lived for many years in India that I was going to the large military station of—well, what shall I call it? Nearly every place ends in bad, pore, or lore. Suppose it to be Dasherabad. I am not as yet very well up in Indian geography, but I do not think there is any place of that name in the country, so no offence can possibly be given. This place, I learnt, was everything that could be desired—an almost European climate, easy to get away from (that being, I have always noticed, the special charm of an Indian station), a railway, plenty of society. The ladies were, of course, charming, and their costumes ravishing—none of your native tailor-made-cut-from-domestic-magazine-pattern dresses would do for them. There were

two or three High Churches, there were races, there was a theatre. In short, it was what Sam Slick would call an A.P.—*i.e.*, airthly Paradise. Such being the case, I could the better obtain a fair estimate of what Indian society really was.

I feel sure that many people at home have very strange notions of us and our habits here in India. They imagine us perpetually clothed in white raiment, sitting down to dinner in our shirt sleeves, smoking hookahs, a charming laxity of morals on the part of the ladies, and ditto, combined with strong alcoholic tendencies, on the part of the gentlemen. Perhaps they may have more exalted ideas of us if they have the good fortune—you see I am modest!—to read this sketch of Indian society.

The first thing I am told to do after having got a roof over my head is to array myself in uniform, gird a sword on my thigh, take cards in my hand, and call on the General and his staff; also the Resident or Chief Commissioner, or whatever else he calls himself, and his staff. That done, I may get into plain clothes, and, having provided myself with a list of all the ladies in the place, commence my round of visits. I believe it is considered the more strictly correct thing to do for a married man to call by himself, and make a kind of reconnaissance. The husband of the lady called upon then does likewise, and, if they are both satisfied, then their wives call. One rule is always observed, and that is, that, married or single, the new-comer calls first. I am, moreover, told that the only hours I can make my calls in are between twelve and two—the hottest in the day. I suppose this is by way of making it all the more meritorious and complimentary, in the same way pilgrims make themselves as uncomfortable as they can by putting peas in their shoes when they visit some shrine. I hire a gharry, or carriage. It comes to the door. It is a wonderful-looking vehicle, on four wheels; there are shutters all round, which if down can never be pulled up, and if up cannot be pulled down. Generally half are up—the very ones you do not want. It is so narrow that you squeeze into it with difficulty, particularly if you are inclined to be a little stout; and on turning sharp round it feels as if it would fall over on one side. The driver sits on the roof, his turban fastened on his head by a bandage passing under the chin, giving him the appearance

of suffering from toothache. He has very little other clothing. The horse is a fearful-looking old screw, mere skin and bone, which, when not jibbing, however, goes along at a decent pace. A large bundle of grass, tied on to the roof for the refreshment of the aforesaid screw, completes the turnout. I step in, and we start. The door will not remain shut; it is continually flying open, and aggravating me. The heat is intense; the dust blows in clouds; the perspiration pours down me; my beautifully-starched collars become very limp, my lavender kids are ruined. At last I arrive at the first on my list. The servant comes down the steps of the verandah for my card, and says, "Missis can't see"—the Indian equivalent for "Not at home." I remember on one occasion, when the servant was told to say "Not at home," the truthful creature came to the carriage door, and delivered himself of the following—

"Missis *saying* she not at home—she in bed, sar."

Sometimes you will be told the reason she can't see, entering very minutely into details that may bring a blush to your modest face. One friend of mine, irritated at going from house to house and getting the eternal "Can't see" for reply, at last requested the servant to inquire if Missis had sore eyes? However, at several of the houses I visited, Missis could see; and then I found out that what are considered evening dresses at home are supposed to be the correct things to wear, both by callers and called upon out here. Some even went so far as to have flowers in their hair. The gentlemen, as yet, have not got to wearing swallow-tailed coats and white ties, but they may do so in time. Old Indians—men who have been long in the country—are rather given to calling in white uniforms; and, as far as coolness is concerned, they have undoubtedly the best of it. Perhaps they do not possess any plain clothes. An officer, who had been thirty years in the country without once going home, told me that seven years before he purchased a suit of plain clothes, or, as he called them—he was a Scotchman—"ceevil clothes," that he had only worn them once, and was afraid of doing so now, as he thought they might be out of fashion, and that the young officers would laugh at him. As there were nearly two hundred houses to call at, it took me the greater part of a week getting through all my visits.

Having now introduced myself to the people in the cantonment, I could put in an appearance at church. Of course, having been in the habit of worshipping only in the best society, I naturally selected a High Church one. My gharry again came into use. No one ever thinks of walking to church, or, indeed, anywhere else in cantonments. Out shooting it is done, but that is a different matter. I had some doubts when I drove up to the church whether it was one or not; it looked a great deal more like Messrs. Ramchunder, Sen, and Co.'s shop. However, as a native was pulling away at a large bell, hung in one corner of the compound, I ventured in. The interior of the building was of the most severely chaste style of architecture. The united talents of the R.E.s and the Public Works Department must have been heavily taxed in its construction. In some High Churches in England the ladies are separated from the gentlemen like sheep from the goats; but here a different plan is adopted. There is a kind of sliding scale of piety. On the seat nearest to the east end there is a large placard, with "For the General" pasted on it; the pew next behind it is for the staff, and the next few for officers; then come seats for the troops; and afterwards, in the very Galilee, the civilians can pray or sleep as they feel disposed. The decorations were very wonderful. Several most palpable banner screens, with unecclesiastical patterns, were hung near the east window. Round the top of the arches were faded illuminated texts, suggestive of Christmas decorations. The choir were correctly enough dressed in cassocks and surplices. Several of the singers were half-castes, very dark indeed; and these, standing beside their fairer-complexioned brethren, reminded me rather of the black and white keys of an organ. The dresses of some of the lady worshippers took my breath away. I know it was very wrong of me to stare about in church; but when I saw a white muslin dress over a pink satin skirt, and a green bonnet, also some rather low dresses, together with bonnets that would have formed a museum of all the fashions in existence for the last ten years, I think I had some slight excuse.

The band-stand is a great institution at a military station. Nearly every evening in the week the band of one regiment or another performs, and there is generally a large attendance. Some remain in their

carriages, which are drawn up round the enclosure; others stroll about. A good deal of spooning is carried on. Unlike most Indian stations, there is a great number of spins, as unmarried ladies are called here. At one time there were no less than thirty-nine. They were irreverently called the Thirty-nine Articles, till there came a fresh importation, when they became the Forty Thieves. Tall hats are de rigueur at the band-stand. Were a billycock to be seen, probably a memo. would appear next day to the following effect:—"The Major-General Commanding observes with regret that it is the practice of some officers to appear at the band improperly. He hopes, &c. &c." What happy people we ought to be!

We have our Mall. Every one rises early, and there is a goodly show of equestrians on every description of horse and pony—Arabs, Walers, Persians, and Pegus; some very handsome, others specimens of the inexpensive charger recommended by a late Commander-in-Chief in India to the impecunious officer. I pity some of the poor animals. There is Mrs. Growler, fifteen stone if she is a pound, on a little Arab. She ought to be mounted on a Waler, like her husband, the colonel commanding the native infantry regiment, whom I see in the distance, as usual without straps to his trousers, and in uniform too. He can't surely have seen the general order that came out a short time ago, anent wearing those articles of dress. In the evening we go for a drive. We differ from Thurtell—I think it was—who considered respectability to consist in driving a gig. A barouche and pair we think to be the height of respectability. A phaeton and pair will just pass muster; but of a one-horse chaise we don't take any account at all. What numbers of lovely brunettes do I see occupants of the carriages. Their friends say they are of Portuguese extraction. Mrs. Vinegar told me in confidence that they were half-castes. I can't think why some persons can be so ill-natured.

There is always croquet going on somewhere or another, either at private parties, or else at one of the messes. Very few grounds are turfed. You play on the gravel, which is watered and rolled, and the sun having baked it, it is something like playing on a brick flooring. People play in a blasé sort of way, as if it was even too much of an exertion holding their mallets; however, it is a capital vehicle for closing a little quiet

flirtation, as also an excuse for a stroll afterwards into the refreshment tent, and having sundry pegs. Some people will persist in bringing their children. There is quite a background of ayahs and bearers carrying babies, while every now and then a precocious infant of more advanced age dashes in and carries off a ball that perhaps has just been put into position. As it is too hot to play much before six, and it gets dark an hour after, games have to be finished by the light of lanterns, which native servants carry about. Poor things! they have no easy time of it, called hither and thither. Many a stinging blow do they get on their face and ankles from hard hit balls. I should think that they were glad that the days of tight croqueting had passed away. Meanwhile, the ladies who are too elderly or too lazy to play, sit apart and indulge in a little quiet scandal, of not always the most good-natured description. Mrs. Col. Chutney is so shocked to hear Mrs. Tulwar does not live happily with her husband; she's such a nice little body, but he drinks, and all that, you know. Mrs. Curry knows that Mrs. Godown is going to give a dance. She thought so yesterday, for when she was calling on her, she saw two or three disnees (native tailors) in the verandah making up ball dresses. The materials must have been bought, no doubt cheap, from a hawker, as she had inquired at both the shops, and they knew nothing about it; and she was certain she had had no box out from England. She sent her ayah that morning to find out all about it from Mrs. G.'s ayah. She pitied her, as she had been trying so to get those three daughters of hers off her hands. It was hard lines for her, particularly as those girls had brought out with them their wedding trousseaux on spec, when they came from their school in England four years ago. Moreover, she heard that, as the dresses had become yellow and spotted, Jamjee and Beerjee had taken them from her in part payment of their bill, which was a very large one, it was said.

We have a nice little theatre too, well-ventilated and commodious. The drop scene is decently painted, and has the conventional lake, mountains, and Italian villas, with gorgeously-dressed, lackadaisical people lolling about in the foreground, playing guitars. With a tasteful arrangement of flowers and ferns, the proscenium looks very pretty. Performances take place usually every six weeks, two months, or even at longer inter-

vals, should the ever-changing inhabitants be of a non-theatrical turn of mind. The acting in some instances is above the average, but the great drawback is the want of actresses; some trumpeter or youthful drummer has to take the part of a Rosalind or Lydia Languish, and though painstaking enough, yet a deficiency or redundancy of the letter H, together with a gruff voice, well-squared elbows, and thick waist, spoil the effect, to say nothing of transient glimpses of anything but twinkling ankles. However, the spectators are not very critical, and there is always plenty of good-natured applause.

There are several balls during the year. Each regiment gives one or two, then the bachelors give one, and the married people return it. Military balls are similar to those in England, inasmuch as the rooms are decorated with all the spare arms and flowers that can be obtained; but what is especially noticeable is the paucity of ladies to the number of gentlemen. Even in the most favoured places they are as one to three. There is a tale told, that once at an up-country station a ball was given. At the last moment, lady after lady sent an excuse. Whooping-cough, measles, or what not, kept them at home, watching over their little darlings. One spin—the only one in the place—however, went. To her horror, she found that she was the only lady in the room. There were nearly a hundred gentlemen present, and these were crowding round, asking for the pleasure of the first dance. It was too much for her. She had only lately arrived from England. Gazing wildly about her, she burst into a flood of tears, and had to be removed. It is a lucky thing when a station can boast of a ball-room with a boarded floor. In a great many places they have no such thing. Canvass stretched over the floor, and chalked, is the substitute; but it is a very indifferent one, as it is always tearing, the seams come unsown, and down come the dancers. However, a tailor, with a few needles threaded and stuck in his turban, is in readiness, and speedily repairs the damage. Dancing is a mistake, I think, in India. It is too hot even under a punkah; and it is not a pretty sight to see Captain Jones and the lovely Miss Smith waltzing past you, the perspiration rolling in torrents down their faces. I don't wonder at the Hindoos' astonishment at the Sahibs' custom of dancing, and thinking how much better their plan was of having it done for them.

The large dinner parties given by the different authorities are very ponderous affairs. The greatest care has to be taken on the part of the host to prevent any mistake as to precedence. I have myself seen, repeatedly, the host walking about the room with an Army List to refer to for the dates of his guests' commissions; but even then he does not always succeed, coming to grief over relative rank. Each guest is expected to bring his own servant to wait upon him; if he did not do so, the chances of his getting anything to eat would be small, as each servant endeavours to get something for his master first. The competition is carried on in a very lively and spirited manner outside the dining-room door, and has to be repressed in a peremptory way by the head butler. It is getting very much the fashion for the gentlemen to leave the table at the same time as the ladies—a good practice, particularly as the wine is often very doubtful. The remainder of the evening is spent in much the same way as it is at home; then, the guest senior in rank having taken his departure, the remainder can file away as quickly as possible.

Society is ever changing in India. In three or four years you will be the oldest inhabitant of the station. Regiments leave, civilians are promoted, others go home, and the place knows them no more, fresh faces appearing to fill up the gaps. Some ladies, on leaving for England, have a curious custom of selling off their old clothes. They send round their butlers with a price list, and coolies carrying the things themselves; so, if you feel desirous of purchasing a little memento of dear Mrs. Soandso, you can do so, from her Sunday bonnet down to her crinoline. In bygone years there was a great many more peculiarities in the customs of Anglo-Indian society; but as the facilities of returning home increased, and people availed themselves of them, they became more civilized, and one by one these customs dropped into desuetude. But of those that still exist, I have endeavoured to give a slight, and I fear an imperfect, sketch that perhaps may amuse the reader.

COVENT-GARDEN FLOWER MARKET.

THIS structure, recently completed at the cost of the proprietor, the Duke of Bedford, and which occupies the site of

three very old and dingy brick houses on the west side of Wellington-street, has doubtless excited the curiosity of passers-by and frequenters of the older market to discover its purpose.

It is solely used for the wholesale trade in flowers; and as business at this season commences at four o'clock a.m., and ends at nine o'clock a.m., its operations are not likely to have been witnessed by any of our readers, except that vigorous but very small section who take their walks abroad at an abnormally early hour.

Viewed from the front, the building consists of three large arches, not unlike a section of a railway viaduct, but of a more ornamental character, being built of the finest creamy-tinted bricks, with Portland stone dressings and terra cotta embellishments, the keystone—which is a terra cotta block—of the centre one bearing the ducal coronet and monogram of the Bedford family.

Entering by one of the huge doors which occupy the two side arches, and traversing a small glass-roofed hall, we emerge into the grand central hall, and are at once struck with its light and elegant appearance. Tall iron columns, painted a pale green, support a sloping roof, partly of glass, which affords a plentiful but not glaring light. The fittings consist of rows of elaborate openwork iron stands or stalls, some six feet high, coloured a reddish brown, and which at an early hour are covered with numberless pots of many-hued flowers, presenting a scene of great beauty as we saunter through the centre aisle, and get glimpses down the many side passages.

Here we may see, to quote the words of the poet of "The Seasons":—

" . . . The snow-drop and the crocus first;
The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue,
And polyanthus of unnumber'd dyes;
The yellow wall-flower, stain'd with iron brown;
And lavish stock
Anemones; auriculas, enriched
With shiny meal o'er all their velvet leaves;
And full ranunculus, of glowing red.

* * * * *
No gradual bloom is wanting; from the bud
First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes;
Nor hyacinth, of purest virgin white,
Low bent and blushing inward; nor jonquils,
Of potent fragrance; nor Narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still;
Nor broad carnations, nor gay spotted pinks;
Nor, showered from every bush, the damask rose.
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,

With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom."

This is not the place, however, for placid contemplation, as we find ourselves elbowed on all sides by a motley crowd of buyers, while unwashed and sleepy-looking costermongers criticise the various blooms in unnecessarily strong language. Here we may discover the solution to the mystery as to how such magnificent plants are found in those odd little glass temples which everywhere stud our suburban roads. Behold the enterprising proprietor, while his distinguished patrons are asleep—or, perchance, seeking their couch after the previous night's ball—selecting his stock of floral rarities for their afternoon inspection and approval.

Outside, in the surrounding streets, there is equal activity and bustle, the whole thoroughfare being closely packed with all kinds of odd vehicles. Costers' barrows, with noisy donkeys, which vainly endeavour to devour the brilliant blossoms on a competitor's truck; greengrocers' carts, horsed with such wretched screws that one cannot help thinking that the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are not wide awake very early in the morning; swearing cabbies, endeavouring to force a way through with their unfortunate fares, who begin to abandon the hope of catching their early train—altogether make up a scene worth sacrificing a few hours' sleep to witness at least once during the London season.

And now, before leaving the market, we are invited to inspect the vaults underneath, which are of great extent, and occupied as wine and beer cellars by Messrs. Findlater, Mackie, & Co., the owners of the adjoining premises, just rebuilt. The Duke of Bedford, with a prudence which should meet the approval of Sir Wilfrid Lawson, M.P., has not allowed any entrance to these cellars from the market; so we accept the courteous offer of the firm to show us over their subterranean world. Descending, then, through their building, we find ourselves in quite a different scene. Long ranges of groined arches, resting on massive piers of solid brickwork, are dimly beheld in the distance, until our eyes get accustomed to the gaslight. This, in the main passages, is assisted by silvered reflectors; and we can soon distinguish long rows of casks, raised on scantling, which are waiting their turn for the contents to be put in bottles and

sent out to the firm's numerous customers. Here, in the part divided off for the growth of the grape, we see pipes of port, butts of sherry, hogsheads of claret, Burgundy, and other light wines, now entering so largely into popular consumption; and fixed against the walls are light-looking iron bins, in which multitudinous bottles are stored away in order to acquire what wine merchants call "bottle flavour" and "bouquet."

Under the central hall is apportioned to beer, which we hear has not yet been displaced by Gladstone Claret; on the contrary, the consumption is larger than ever, and the hundreds of casks we see bearing the familiar names of Bass, Allsopp, and Guinness, bear testimony to the fact. Shall we add that we finished our inspection before a reserved cuvée of "dry Crément," and that we gave our unqualified adhesion to the assertion that a cool vault is the most delightful place to enjoy the flavour of the grand wine of Champagne.

ROSE LEAVES.

WE stood beside the sleeping bay;
She held my gift-rose in her hand;
It was the last sweet trysting-day,
And then, ho! for a strange, far land.
She plucked each tender leaf apart,
And each leaf told its tale to me—
Each leaf a hope torn from my heart:
The leaves fell fluttering by the sea.

And oft in far-off lands I thought
Of one who never could be mine;
Who must be loved, but be unsought—
'Twas hard to love and not repine.
Those rose leaves withered on the sand,
But other roses bloom for thee;
O lost love in the distant land,
O rose leaves withered by the sea!

GORDON CAMPBELL.

TABLE TALK.

A MICROSCOPE stand has been contrived by Mr. John Browning, the eminent maker of scientific instruments, of the Strand. This new stand has a triangular base, supporting two uprights, on the top of which is clamped a strong circular table, with inclining motion; the under part carrying an arm, with sliding and double-jointed mirror. On this table another is fitted to rotate, carrying the limb and optical body: this upper table is the stage of the microscope, and is covered with a glass bed, upon which the objects are placed for examination. In the movement of rotation, the

stage with the object and limb and optical body all turn together; and as the object and its optical image are absolutely concentric, it remains in the field of vision during the whole revolution, whatever objective be used. Thus the most delicate variations of position and illumination can be obtained, greatly facilitating practical work. Many efforts have been made in England to produce a concentric turning-stage, but hitherto with only partial success. A substage of the simplest form carries diaphragms that can be slid up till in contact with the object, varying the illumination, or removable at pleasure. The mirror is of such focal length that a beam of light can be highly condensed under the object; thus, in great measure supplanting the use of the expensive achromatic condensers. There is a double draw-tube to the optical body, for readily increasing the magnification of the objectives. It has been the aim to make a stand of the least complicated form, combining the steadiness of the best English models with the concentric turning-stage, which has long been the chief merit of the best foreign models. Mr. John Mayall, jun., suggested to Mr. Browning the necessity for such a microscope, and assisted with valuable hints during the preliminary experiments which led to its production. Much attention has been given to the appearance of the new stand, while the excellence of the workmanship and freedom from flexure permit the use of the highest power objectives on it.

A CORRESPONDENT: When at Massachusetts, I heard a characteristic story of a simple-minded deacon, one of the Pilgrim Fathers. The worthy man was in the habit of drawing his salary every Saturday afternoon in silver, and dispensing it among the poor people on the way home from the treasury—half a dollar to one, a quarter to another, and so on, until he had not much to bring back to his wife. She, mindful of the old saying that charity begins at home, and not at all relishing being mulcted of her dues, instructed the treasurer, when giving her husband his salary, to tie it up in a handkerchief with so many and such tight knots that he could not dispense it in dribbets as heretofore. On arriving at the first house, he fumbled for a long time with the handkerchief, but it resisted his endeavours. "Dear friend," said he to the proprietor,

"it is evident to me that the Lord intended the whole of it for thee;" and so saying, he gave the handkerchief to her, and went home to his wife empty-handed.

I REMEMBER having read somewhere an anecdote of the hero of Trafalgar, which, I think, is a good illustration of the difference between the naval customs of his day and of the present. On one occasion, when engaged in an exciting stern chase of some Frenchman, he roared out to his quartermaster, who had the helm, "Thice!" (put the helm hard up). "Thice it is, my lord," said he. "No, it isn't," said Nelson—"nothing of the sort." "Yes, it is, my lord." "Then I suppose I lie," said Nelson. "Yes, you do, my lord," said the matter-of-fact man. Now, if it were possible that such a thing could happen to a post-captain of the present day, he would have had the quartermaster in irons at once. Not so Nelson. He held on until he had caught up the Frenchman, when he gave him—as he always did every enemy—the most tremendous beating that the mind of man can conceive; and, in the excitement of victory, forgot all about the quartermaster.

PRAY ALLOW ME to draw the attention of your readers to one of the most beautiful stories I have ever read, that of "The Steadfast Prince." Besides being almost unknown to the general public, it has the further merit of being perfectly true—nothing of fiction about it. Far be it from me to spoil anybody's interest by recounting any of it. I would merely refer anybody who is curious to learn anything about this Spaniard—to the full as noble a man as the Cid—to the poet Zimmermann or to Archbishop Trench. Bon Gualtier has also, I think, alluded to him in one of his Spanish ballads, and there is a fine overture about him by the accomplished Mendelssohn.

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